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THE

MODERN THEATRE;

A COLLECTION OF

SUCCESSFUL MODERN PLAYS,

AS ACTED AT

THE THEATRES ROYAL, LONDON.

PRINTED FROM THE PROMPT BOOKS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS.

SELECTED BY

MRS INCHBALD.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

VOL. VII.

I'LL TELL YOU WHAT.
NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOURS.
TRIP TO SCARBOROUGH.
WISE MAN OF THE EAST.
PERCY.

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EDINBURGH:
Printed by James Clarke.

I'LL TELL YOU WHAT;

A

COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, HAYMARKET.

BY

MRS. INCHBALD.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Major Cyprus,	*Mr Palmer.*
Mr Anthony Euston,	*Mr Bensley.*
Colonel Downright,	*Mr Aickin.*
Charles Euston,	*Mr Bannister, jun.*
Sir George Euston,	*Mr Williamson.*
Sir Harry Harmless,	*Mr R. Palmer.*
Servants,	*Messrs Ledger, Gaudry, and Lyons.*
Mr Euston,	*Mr Parsons.*
Lady Euston,	*Mrs Bulkley.*
Lady Harriet Cyprus,	*Mrs Bates.*
Bloom,	*Mrs Riley.*
A Young Lady,	*Miss Farren.*

I'LL TELL YOU WHAT.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Room at SIR GEORGE EUSTON'S.

Enter MR. EUSTON, *followed by* SIR GEORGE.

Sir Geo. But, my dear uncle, why in such a passion?

Mr Eus. I can't help it—I am out of all patience! Did not I leave you one of the happiest men in the world?

Sir Geo. Well, and so you find me, Sir.

Mr Eus. 'Tis false—you are not happy—you can't be happy; 'tis false—and you shan't be happy.

Sir Geo. If you are resolved to make me otherwise, Sir—

Mr Eus. No, I am not resolved—'tis yourself that is resolved. Did not I leave you one of the happiest of men?—married to one of the most beautiful women in the world? Did not I give you my blessing and a large fortune, and did I not stay and see you father of a fine boy?—Then only just stept over to visit my estate in St. Kitt's, and now, I'm come back, here I find you married to another woman, and your first wife still *living*—and, egad, she is married to another man!

Sir Geo. Dear uncle, I should certainly have asked your opinion and my uncle Anthony's on the subject, but your absence put it out of my power; and it was universally believed the ship in which you sailed was lost.

Mr Eus. Well, you will hear what my brother will say to it.

Sir Geo. I trust, Sir, when I have explained every thing, you will not only think me worthy of your pardon, but even of being pleaded for to my uncle.

Mr Eus. Not I, indeed—Nay, were it in my power to do you any good, I would not; I shan't forgive you myself; much less ask him. But you are right in fixing on me for a mediator; my brother pays much regard to me, truly. I have been of infinite service, to be sure, in reconciling him to his own poor boy. Nay, did he not even (for my brother Anthony would always be master, although he was the youngest) when I went to him to persuade him to forgive poor Charles, his son, did he not even (instead of my gaining him over, and getting something for the poor boy,) did he not even draw me into a promise never to do any thing for him myself? My brother does what he pleases with me—but nobody else shall—No, what I want in resolution to him, I'll make up in obstinacy, to other people.

Sir Geo. Sir, if you will but hear the just pleas I have to offer—

Mr Eus. I will hear no pleas—What do you think my brother will say? Why, you inconsiderate boy! He had designed you for his heir!

Sir Geo. I should be as sorry, Sir, to excite his displeasure as I am at incurring yours; yet, give me leave to add, I should derive very little enjoyment from the possession of a fortune which his son, my poor cousin, (but for a single act of imprudence) had a right to expect. And be assured, Sir, that if this seeming indiscretion of mine, when compared with that of his son's, shou'd be regarded so unfavourably as to make *his* offence appear lighter to my uncle, and move him to forgiveness, I will contentedly support the burthen of his resentment.

Mr Eus. Why now, that's well spoken. You silly young rogue, I am not angry with you for getting rid of your wife (for that, I dare say, is what every sensible man in the world wou'd do if he cou'd,) I am only angry with you for getting another. Could not you know when you were well off, you blockhead?

Sir Geo. Dear uncle, as you are a bachelor, and can only speak of wives from theory, suppose we drop the subject? Is my uncle Anthony come to his house? He knows nothing of the alteration that has taken place in my family, you tell me: Shou'd I wait on him, or do you think he will favour me with a visit first?

Mr Eus. Now, what a deal of ceremony! 'Tis a fine thing to *look* like a man of consequence. My brother Anthony has had more privileges from his looks than I ever had from being eldest son—even you, whom I love so well, and have given half my fortune to, (and 'tis not long you know that you have expected a sixpence from Anthony,) yet you

never meet *him* without a low bow. "How do you do, Sir? I hope you are well, uncle! I am glad to see you!" And you stumble over *me*, with "So uncle, how is it? how is it, uncle?"—And when you invite us both, "Uncle Anthony, I hope I shall have the *honour* of your company:" While you give me a nod, "Uncle, I shall see you."

Sir Geo. Dear Sir—

Mr Eus. Nay, with every other person 'tis the same thing—If we are stuffed into a coach, with a little chattering pert Miss, "Oh dear, Mr Anthony Euston, you must not ride backwards, here is room for *you* on this seat—and *Mr Euston*, I know, will like one seat as well as another;"—and then am I put with my back to the horses, though my head is whirling all the time like one of the coach wheels. Then if any thing be lost, or wanted, when no servant is by, "Mr *Anthony* Euston must not stir for the world—but *Mr Euston*, they know, will be so kind as to go for it." And this is all because I am good natured. Egad! if this is my reward, no wonder there are so few in the world of my temper.

Sir Geo. But, dear Sir, no jesting. Does my uncle intend to call on me or not?

Mr Eus. Yes, I dare say he did intend it; and, if he does not hear of what you have been doing, before he gets to your house, he will.

Sir Geo. Why then, my dear uncle, will you step home, and give orders that none of the servants mention any thing to him this morning?

Mr Eus. There now!—"*I* step home and give orders!" There 'tis, again!—Wou'd you ask my brother to "step home, and give orders?" No, I fancy not!—But I—poor I—will be so good as to do it, you think—But, for once I won't. Besides, Anthony never asks questions of servants. We enquired of our house-keeper, indeed, how you did, last

night; she told us both you and your lady were well, and so we thought all safe. Anthony will ask no more questions; therefore, you may have the pleasure of explaining matters to him yourself, as you have to me.

Sir Geo. I shou'd be sorry if any imperfect account shou'd reach him; for, so sincere is my respect for him, I wou'd not even suffer for a moment in his esteem. I will be with him in half an hour, but I am afraid—

Mr Eus. No, no, he'll not be out, nor have had any company in that time; for my brother is no sailor, and he'll be too fond of the exchange of a bed for a hammock to be stirring so soon. However, I think I *will* step home, and give a caution to the servants that they don't mention your divorce to him. As for myself, I'll keep out of his way—I'll not go near him; for I will say this for my brother, although it was never in my power to persuade him to forgive an injury or an indiscretion in my life, yet I never said to him, "Brother Anthony, *don't* forgive a thing," that he did not take my advice.

Sir Geo. Come, uncle, walk into the parlour before you go; let me introduce you to Lady Euston—Do step in, and take your chocolate with her.

Mr Eus. And, by the time I have taken a turn in the Park, and eaten a mouthful of dinner, you'll, perhaps, have a new Lady Euston to introduce me to, and I may drink tea with *her*.

Sir Geo. Well, uncle, whether you stay or go, I must bid you a good morning; for I am obliged to attend a friend, who has a law-suit depending, and I fear I shall be waited for—my presence won't be required long, and I'll be with my uncle Anthony within half an hour.

Mr Eus. Very well, [*Going*] but you had better take an hour—Let me advise you to take an hour. Anthony is devilish sharp—he is not to be imposed

upon. Take an hour, or an hour and half, before you see him—Anthony is a deep man, he is not to be deceived; for, I dare say, in his time, he has been as idle as yourself—and I *will* go on your errand.

[*Exeunt Mr Euston and Sir George, separately.*

SCENE II.

A Room at MAJOR CYPRUS'.

LADY HARRIET CYPRUS, *and* BLOOM, *waiting.*

Lady Har. Married!

Bloom. Yes, my Lady, as sure as death.

Lady Har. Amazing! It cannot be.

Bloom. O yes, my Lady, I have known of it these three months; but, as they kept out of town till within this fortnight, and your ladyship has been abroad most of that time, I thought I would not tell your ladyship till we returned to London, when your ladyship was sure to hear of it. Why they live but just by, madam; and my master, I know, has been several times in company where they have been visiting.

Lady Har. Ay, she was your master's intended.

Bloom. O yes, my lady, I know that.

Lady Har. Insignificant girl! I triumphed, when I snatched him from her, and now I suppose she thinks to triumph equally.

Bloom. No doubt, madam; but, if I was you, I wou'd let her see I cared nothing about him.

Lady Har. And do you imagine I do care? No, indeed, Bloom; my exchange is for the better, I am certain; and (*sighing*) entirely to my satisfaction.

Bloom. Indeed I think so, Madam: you certainly have changed for the better—and, bless me, I think, of all the husbands I ever saw, my present master is sure the fondest.

Lady Har. As for that—no one cou'd be fonder than Sir George, at first.

Bloom. Ay, my lady, but Major Cyprus is not so flighty as Sir George.

Lady Har. Not so flighty—(*sighs.*) I have been envy'd Sir George's gaiety a thousand times.

Bloom. Yes, my lady, when your ladyship married first, I suppose; but, you know, in a few months, Sir George altered so much, and seemed so miserable, I protest, every single rap that came at the door made my blood run cold, for I took it for the report of a pistol.

Lady Har. You need not have feared him, Bloom —he is too fond of the pleasures of this life—Dear pleasures, which he wanted to retrench me in.

Bloom. More shame for him, madam. Now my present master is a soldier; and, what is more, I dare say will soon be call'd on to go abroad.

Lady Har. Ha!

Bloom. Nay, I beg your ladyship's pardon—I thought perhaps your ladyship wished to see the Major show himself a courageous gentleman in the field; and that that was the reason of your preferring him to Sir George.

Lady Har. I prefer! Did not my brother, from Sir George's humiliating suspicions and cruel treatment of me, compel us to a divorce; and then, as a defence for my weakness, forced me into the arms of the Major; being, I suppose, convinced that no-

thing less than a soldier, should undertake the guard of a lady's honour!

Bloom. Very true, madam—and I heard the Major say, this morning, as your ladyship left the room, that "your ladyship's honour would require the guard of a file of musketeers."

Lady Har. Ungenerous man—even worse to me than Sir George; for poor Sir George, from my indiscreet partiality to this ingrate, had some pretence for his unkind apprehensions; but Mr Cyprus, who knows what proofs of affection I have given him, even in preference to the man I had sworn to love—

Bloom. Nay, I fancy, that is what frightens my master; for I believe he is a little fearful lest your ladyship shou'd chance to be forsworn again.

Lady Har. Insolent supposition! He knows the delicacy of my sentiments—my honour to Sir George—knows that, although his unwearied artifices conquered my too susceptible heart, and hurried me to indiscretions, I merited not that severe contumely I have endured.

Bloom. Bless my soul! Well now, I assure you, you surprise me! And so, my lady, there was nothing at all in it, when Sir George found my master in the closet?

Lady Har. What did you suppose?

Bloom. Oh, my lady, nothing—I hope I did not distress your ladyship by the mention of Sir George's second marriage.

Lady Har. Ridiculous!

Bloom. Nay, indeed, I always thought, as your ladyship wou'd not live with him yourself, your ladyship did not wish to prevent them that wou'd.

Lady Har. Don't mention that insignificant woman!

Bloom. If I was your ladyship, I am sure, I

wou'd not care—especially as I got married before him.

Lady Har. Leave me.

Bloom. (Aside.) She'll have another husband within half a year—and so have three all alive at once.—Well, I will say, 'tis very hard that, because I am poor, I never can have above one at a time.

[*Exit* BLOOM.

Lady Har. And so, Sir George has been married these three months to another, and entirely forgot me. To be so soon forgotten!—I shall never now forget him, I am certain. He has behaved like a man of resolution and spirit, in casting me from his heart, and I feel the irreparable loss. Why were we divorced? I shou'd have disliked him still had he been my husband; and yet how tender, how patient to my failings to what Mr Cyprus is. His cruel and unjust suspicions of me are not to be borne. How provokingly did he treat me last night—I was too tame; but the next time he insults me, with his jealousy, I will endeavour to augment rather than pacify it—I'll try a reverse of conduct—Though, indeed, I *am* tolerably provoking in all our wrangles:—Yes, thank heaven, I can say as cool, spiteful things, as any woman in the world. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

Another apartment in Major Cyprus' house.

Enter COLONEL DOWNRIGHT, *followed by the* MAJOR.

Col. Down. I assure you, Major, this is the first visit I have made since I set my foot in London.—Nay, and faith, no great compliment to you, neither;

for, as I parted with my fellow passengers at Portsmouth, I don't know that I have a friend or acquaintance in the whole town but yourself.

Major Cyp. I am happy in your want of friends, Colonel, if it gives you occasion to consider me as one.

Col. Down. As for that, I don't want friends, neither, I believe; only they are not here, at present. I have plenty of friends on the other side the Atlantic.—Zounds! I think it wou'd be hard for a man, who has been so long in the army, and borne a post like mine in it, not to have a *regiment* of friends, at least.

Major Cyp. Which is a great consolation to you, no doubt, Colonel.

Col. Down. The greatest in the world, Major. But what! you have changed your house since I was last in England: this is not the same, I think, tho' near the same spot.

Major Cyp. Yes, I have changed my house; and, what is more, changed my state too, Colonel.

Col. Down. Why, you are not married?

Major Cyp. What surprises you?

Col. Down. Nay, I am not surprised at your marrying; only at your appearing so easy about it!

Major Cyp. And why not, Colonel? A valuable woman—

Col. Down. Very true, very true—and so I wish you joy, with all my heart. *(Shaking hands.)* But, who is the Lady, pray? Do I know her, or any of her family?

Major Cyp. Did you know Sir George Euston?

Col. Down. I have heard of him.

Major Cyp. She was his lady.

Col. Down. A widow!

Major Cyp. No—she was no widow.

Col. Down. Did not you say she was Sir George Euston's wife?

Major Cyp. Very true; but Sir George is still living.

Col. Down. What, the devil! is the man living, and you married to his wife?

Major Cyp. It was a divorce, Colonel.

Col. Down. A divorce!—Whu! Now I understand you. Why, that's *mariage en militaire.* You might well appear so easy.

Major Cyp. Fye, Colonel;—I assure you, Lady Harriet Cyprus and I are a most happy couple—and my having snatched her from "a dull, doating husband," gives superior pleasure and triumph to our bliss.

Col. Down. The husband is much obliged to you both.

Major Cyp. Why, poor fellow, that is the worst. In spite of the congratulations I receive from my friends, and my natural desire of fame, and propensity to conquest, I do feel, and cannot help it, a most deep sorrow and compassion for the thorns I have planted in his bosom.

Col. Down. But, I suppose, he used his lady very ill, before he provoked her to the divorce, and certainly preferred some other?

Major Cyp. Oh no, by no means! He doated on her, even to the day of their separation, notwithstanding it was he who sued for the divorce.

Col. Down. He who sued for the divorce—Oh! that was it! I understood you, that you had planted *thorns*—but you said *horns,* I suppose.

Major Cyp. (*Smiles.*) Ha! Ha!

Col. Down. Oh! I wish you much joy—

Major Cyp. Why ironically, Colonel? Depend upon it, I am the envy of all the men in town: Lady Harriet Cyprus is a perfect beauty.

Col. Down. a Im glad she is perfect in some respect.

Major Cyp. Oh! (*With some inquietude.*) ridiculous, Colonel—Divorces happen now every day; and the favoured lover is the most admired and envied of mortals, while the poor husband becomes an object of general pity.

Col. Down. Ay, the husband?

Major Cyp. Yes, the husband.

Col. Down. Ay, and *you* are the husband now.

Major Cyp. Pshaw! the forsaken husband.

Col. Down. You pity him?

Major Cyp. Certainly.

Col. Down. And, if he is a tender hearted man, I suppose, he pities you.

Major Cyp. Ha, ha, ha!—Let me describe a scene to you, where poor Sir George's situation must affect the most obdurate heart. Lady Harriet Euston, (now Lady Harriet Cyprus,) was, when I first became acquainted with her, a very loving wife: (We are friends, Colonel, and I will venture to recount a few anecdotes to you) a very loving wife, indeed; and but for my insinuations—artful insinuations I may call them—had continued her conjugal regard—she had been to this hour an example to wives, if I had not tempted her to stray.

Col. Down. Ay, you! or somebody else.

Major Cyp. (*Disturbed.*) Hear me out, Colonel. She was long an example to wives—she was, I assure you. But to describe to you Sir George's pitiable situation, and what was chiefly the cause of the divorce.—One evening, we had prolonged the *tête-à-tête* rather beyond the usual time; when, unexpectedly, Sir George and a party of beaux and belles were rushing up stairs,—"Dear Major," cried my wife——

Col. Down. Your wife? Sir George's, you mean.

Major Cyp. Yes, Sir George's *then*, but my wife *now*.

Col. Down. Ay, ay, and I most sincerely give you joy! (*Ironically.*)

Major Cyp. Pshaw! you put me out.—"Dear Major," cried my wife; or Sir George's, if you will have it so—"What will become of us," (for Sir George had given us some little proofs of his jealousy,) "what will become of us!" exclaimed the then Lady Harriet Euston. "Put me into your thimble; into the eye of your needle, madam," said I—Instead of which, cramm'd I was into that closet.

Col. Down. That closet!

Major Cyp. That very identical closet, which you see there; for Sir George never loved the house after, and so settled it on her Ladyship.—Screwed up in that closet, I believe I remained ten minutes; when old Lady Downfall, who was of the party, called for drops; the door was opened,—and out dropt your humble servant.

Col. Down. Zounds! it was enough to make you wish yourself—

Major Cyp. Nay, it was Sir George's place to wish. Every beau in the room was round me in a moment; and, in a whisper, "Give you joy, Major,"—"The happiest man in the world,"—"An Alexander,"—"A conqueror every where." Even old Sir Samson Shrivel, shook his head, and wished to be in my place.

Col. Down. Zounds! I would have thrust him into the closet, and kept him there for a month. But what did the husband say all this time?

Major Cyp. That is what I was going to tell you. What did he say? Why, he said nothing. You may depend upon it, he heard and saw all the half-stifled laughs, and was wise enough to know to whom they were directed: So, poor fellow, he turned pale,

bit his lips—looked at her ladyship—looked at me—looked at his sword—and then cried "Heigh ho!"

Col. Down. Heigh ho! And what the deuce did you say?

Major. What do you think I said? Egad, I *was* a little confused.

Col. Down. Confused!

Major Cyp. And do you know I said—Faith, it was an odd speech, and has been laughed at since in a thousand fashionable circles—the conclusion of it has been particularly marked.—"Dear Sir George," said I.—He was standing where you may be (here, a little more this way,) and I just where I am at present—"Dear Sir George," said I, (half stifling a laugh, for by my soul I could not help it, though I pitied the poor devil, too,)—"Dear Sir George," said I, "I'll tell you what,"—you will find *nobody* to blame in this affair—I protest my being in that closet was entirely owing to—"I'll tell you what,"—in short, to an—an *undescribable something*——There I made a full stop.

Col. Down. "An undescribable something."

Major Cyp. 'Tis true, upon my soul! those were the very words.

Col. Down. Owing to an "Undescribable something," and "I'll tell you what," that I got into this closet:—And so, I suppose, the next day Sir George left both his wife and the closet, and you have ever since held possession?

Major Cyp. After some other explanations, and regular proceedings, I became the happy husband he was never formed to be.

Col. Down. But I hope you keep the key of the closet?

Major Cyp. You will have your joke, Colonel.—Sir George, out of despair, is just married again; and Lady Harriet's affection for me is such—yet faith, I must confess to you too, Colonel, that notwithstand-

ing I am so very happy in my marriage—my wife so very beautiful and so affectionate, yet I am a sad wicked fellow; I have not forgot my old ways—no, I am going to-morrow evening to meet a lady of untarnished reputation—a married lady. Faith, 'tis wrong—I know it is; but I cannot withstand the temptation—no, I cannot forget my old ways.

(*Yawning.*)

Col. Down. And do you suppose her Ladyship can forget *her* old ways either? (*Yawning.*)

Major Cyp. For shame, Colonel! but you are so fond of a joke. Egad, I have a great mind to make you laugh most heartily at the business I have now on my hands—you wou'd say it was the most impudent thing of me. I'll tell you another time, on purpose to make you laugh; no other design whatever. (*A bell rings.*) That is her ladyship's bell—Come, I will introduce you to her directly; and, I flatter myself, you will admire my choice.

Col. Down. It does indeed excite my admiration, most prodigiously!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

Enter MR ANTHONY EUSTON, *and a* SERVANT.

Ser. I'll let my master know immediately, Sir.

[*Exit.*

Mr Ant. Sir George has changed all his servants, I think, as well as his house, for I have not seen one

that I know; and not one of them seems to know their old friend Anthony Euston.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. I beg your pardon, Sir; I thought my master had been at home; but he is not.

Mr Ant. Is not he?

Ser. No, Sir; he has been gone out this half-hour.

Mr. Ant. He is gone to my house then, I dare say. Is your lady at home?

Ser. Yes, Sir.

Mr Ant. Be so kind as to let her know I should be glad to see her.

Ser. What name, pray Sir?

Mr Ant. Only say a relation she will be glad to see. [*Exit Servant.*] Sir George may not be gone to my house, neither; for, perhaps, my brother has not yet called on him, and he may be ignorant of our arrival.—This house is a handsome one; yet, I wonder Sir George should leave his other; for I remember my niece was remarkably fond of its situation.—Poor girl—if she knew it was Anthony, Anthony Euston, I believe she wou'd not be so long in coming. (*Goes to the side of the scene, and calls.*) Come, come, my dear! 'tis an old friend that wants to see you. (*He walks to the opposite side, and, when he hears Lady Euston entering, he returns and calls.*) Come, come—sure you have kept me long enough!

Enter LADY EUSTON.

(As Mr Anthony is going with great eagerness to salute her, he stops short, and she curtsies.)

Mr Ant. I beg your pardon, madam! I thought I had been speaking to my niece.

Lady Eus. Your niece, Sir?

Mr Ant. The lady of the house, madam.

Lady Eus. I have the honour to be mistress of this house, Sir.

Mr Ant. Madam?

Lady Eus. My name is Euston, Sir.

Mr Ant. Good Heaven! Is then my niece, that beautiful young woman, dead?

Lady Eus. The lady that was Lady Harriet Ogle, Sir?

Mr Ant. Yes.

Lady Eus. No, Sir, she is still living, and very well: I saw her the other morning.

Mr Ant. Madam, you rejoice me.

Lady Eus. You are only mistaken in the house, Sir; that's all.

Mr Ant. Madam, you make me happier than I can express. But how cou'd the mistake happen? They told me my nephew lived here. Indeed, I named no names at the door, but only ask'd the man if his master was within; and your name being Euston, madam, I suppose, first caused the mistake.

Lady Eus. Very likely, Sir.

Mr Ant. I beg pardon for the trouble I have given you.

Lady Eus. No apologies, Sir. Permit me to let one of my servants shew you to Lady Harriet's.

Mr Ant. No, I am much obliged to you. If it is the same house that Sir George Euston lived in, about two years ago, I know it very well.

Lady Eus. It is, Sir.

Mr Ant. Madam, I thank you—and once more beg pardon for the trouble I have given you, through a mistake.

Lady Eus. Dear Sir, no apology. Permit the servant to shew you to Lady Harriet's.

Mr Ant. No, madam, I thank you; I have been often there, and know the house very well.—Madam, good morning to you—I beg your pardon—good morning, madam. [*Exit* MR ANTHONY.

Lady Eus. Good morning to you, Sir.—This is certainly an uncle of Lady Harriet's, who is unacquainted with her divorce—and I cou'd not inform him of it; 'twould have led to such disagreeable explanations, and such a long round-about story it must have caused—"Sir, I am *second wife* to your *present* niece's *first husband.*" Lud! Lud! how ashamed I shou'd have been. Lady Harriet had better explain it by far. [*Exit* LADY EUSTON.

SCENE II.

A Room at MAJOR CYPRUS'.

Enter COLONEL DOWNRIGHT *and* SIR HARRY HARMLESS.

Sir Har. Now the Major is gone, Colonel—notwithstanding all he has been talking, of love, and his vast happiness, you will hardly believe it, perhaps—but he is not so very happy.

Col. Down. No!

Sir Har. No, poor man: you will hardly think it, but he is jealous.

Col. Down. What, already? And, for Heaven's sake, of whom?

Sir Har. Nay, I assure you he has no cause—Nor is he jealous of one alone alone—he is so of every body—and will be so of you; therefore, I tell you, that you may be on your guard. I am constantly with his lady and him, and, because the poor woman once shut him up in her closet, he now suspects a lover concealed in every part of the house; and I have known him, when the mad fit has been upon him, search for a supposed rival even in her drawers and band-boxes.

Col. Down. Pray, Sir, do you live in the house?

Sir Har. I have been on a visit here these six weeks.

Col. Down. And during that time—

Sir Har. I have seen such things! Enough to terrify me from marrying; for wives are sometimes so provoking, I am sure I cou'd not keep my temper. Now, here is Lady Harriet Cyprus, you cannot think how provoking she is—she sometimes says such terrible things to her husband, that, I am sure, if she was my wife—

Col. Down. Why you wou'd not beat her, would you, or lock her up?

Sir. Har. No—but perhaps I might kick her lap-dog, or do some outrage to her dress.

Col. Down. You wou'd make an admirable soldier, Sir Harry.

Sir Har. I must own, Colonel, I shou'd have no objection to a commission, where the regimentals were becoming.

Col. Down. Really!

Sir Har. And indeed, Colonel, I am positive you wou'd be obliged to *press* commissioned officers, if it were not for the becomingness of some of their dresses.

Col. Down. Give me your hand, Sir Harry. I like you much; and could I see you master of a fire-lock, or a wife—

Sir Har. No. While my neighbours marry, I never shall.

Col. Down. Why so, Sir Harry?

Sir Har. Their wives will do for me.

Col. Down. I am amazed, Sir Harry, that the Major, jealous as you describe him, should suffer you to remain in his house!

Sir. Har. I have often been surprised at it myself.

Col. Down. You have!

Sir Har. But he never was jealous of *me.* Zounds! it piques me sometimes. The ladies are fond of me, and yet the gentlemen are not jealous of me. But, indeed, my amours have all been managed so secretly, that none of them have ever yet come to light.

Col. Down. But who has been to blame there, Sir Harry?

Sir Har. I have paid regard to the reputation of the ladies, and none to my own. I expect an assignation to-morrow evening; and I question whether I shall mention it to above three or four of my acquaintance, notwithstanding the lady is reputed a woman of honour, and is, besides, a married lady.

Col. Down. And would you divulge the appointment sooner on that account?

Sir Har. Certainly! Had I a wish to build a reputation.

Col. Down. Who have we here? (*Looking out.*)

Sir Har. The Major and her ladyship! He has been following her into the Park, and is now conducting her home. I assure you their company at present will not be very desirable; so step this way, dear Colonel, and I will indulge you with a few more particulars. Egad, I can surprise you!

[*Exeunt* COLONEL DOWNRIGHT *and* SIR HARRY.

Enter LADY HARRIET CYPRUS, *followed by* MAJOR CYPRUS.

Major Cyp. So, Madam, I have followed you home, and now shou'd be glad to know, what unusual whim brought you into the Park so early?

Lady Har. How can you be so teazing as to ask questions? Especially when you see I am too fatigued to answer.

Major Cyp. Fatigued, madam? How is it possible—

Lady Har. Don't speak so loud.—I'm thinking of something else.

Major Cyp. Zounds, madam, I say—

Lady Har. How can you, Major? Sir George Euston, with all his faults, never asked me such impertinent questions!

Major Cyp. Sir George, madam! How dare you mention his name to me, madam? How dare you mention to me that contemptible ——?

Lady Har. Dear Major, do not be severe—consider you are—a married man yourself now.

Major Cyp. Heavens! Madam, do not imagine—

Lady Har. And you know every gentleman is liable to—

Major Cyp. What, madam?

Lady Har. Be married. There is nothing certain in this world.

Major Cyp. Very well, madam! Very well—I believe I understand your insinuation; and I deserve it. I justly deserve it for venturing my happiness with a woman whose principles I *knew*.

Lady Har. How dare you, Major Cyprus, upbraid me, or think, because my unhappy partiality for you *once* betrayed me into indiscretions, I am not now an altered woman? I am sure I have most heartily repented of all my faults, and wished a thousand times I had never seen you.

Major Cyp. Exceedingly well, indeed, madam! Exceedingly well. Repent you ever saw me! What am I to expect after such a declaration? And why repent you ever saw me? What, you won't speak! I believe you are the only woman who cou'd call me her husband, and be insensible of her happiness. When you consider, too, your release from Sir George.—What makes you smile, madam? Surely, after all your seeming contempt for Sir George, you

wou'd not, even in *idea*, put him in competition with *me?* Though, by heaven, your continual mention of him is enough—did I not know how much you despise him. I am amazed how you cou'd ever consent to marry such a being, and so I have told you a hundred times—Not one accomplishment.

Lady Har. Now you provoke me—he had a thousand!

Major Cyp. That I am destitute of?

Lady Har. (*Sighs.*) Oh!

Major Cyp. Zounds, madam, what do you mean by that sigh? And in what quality, pray, did your *first* husband, your *first* husband, madam—in what quality did he eclipse your humble servant?

Lady Har. (After a pause.) He danced better than any man I ever saw.

Major Cyp. Dance better!

Lady Har. And his bow was exquisite.

Major Cyp. (Bowing.) O—your most obedient!

Lady Har. Then, sometimes, he was the most entertaining—

Major Cyp. You would have a husband entertain his wife then?

Lady Har. Certainly—and entertain himself, at the same time.

Major Cyp. I wish to heaven you had kept him, with all his accomplishments!

Lady Har. (Sighs, and shakes her head.) Oh!

Major Cyp. Damnation!—*(After a pause, comes up to her with a softened tone of voice.)* Come hither.—Come, tell me,—wou'd you?—and so you wou'd really prefer your old husband to me?

Lady Har. Old! He was the youngest.

Major Cyp. Madam, madam, I'll hear no more—I'll suffer no more. Since you can compare that

contemptible animal to me, I have done with you—you are below even my resentment.

Lady Har. Dear Major, say what you will, Sir George had his virtues—He seldom asked me where I was going; or who visited me in his absence? Where I had been walking? What made me so remarkably cheerful, or why I looked so very ill-natured? In short, he was truly and literally, in every respect, a fashionable husband.

Major. Cyp. You are—

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Sir, a gentleman below desires to see you; I did not know whether you chose to be at home or not, so I told him I believed you were gone out, but that I wou'd come and see.

Major Cyp. I *am* gone out—go and tell him so. [*Exit Servant.*] I am in too ill a humour to see any body—my temper is spoiled. I am neither fit for company, pleasure, business, nor any thing.

Lady Har. Nor I—I am spoil'd too.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. The gentleman, madam, begs to see you. Do you chuse I should show him up?

Lady Har. Yes, show him up—he may be of service to my spirits. Who is he? What is his name?

Serv. I ask'd him, madam, but he would not say. He first asked me if my master was within; and when I return'd, and told him no, he said, tell your lady, Lady Harriet, I desire to see *her*.—He spoke as if he was acquainted with your ladyship.

La. Har. Show him up.

Major Cyp. You will please to take him into another room.

La. Har. It is not my intention to leave this room till dinner.

Major Cyp. Nor mine.

La. Har. Then you'll have an opportunity of assuring the gentleman, *yourself*, you are not at home.

Serv. Shou'd I shew the gentleman into another room, madam?

Major Cyp. No! [*Exit angrily.*

La. Har. Shew the gentleman up. (*Exit Servant.*) Who in the name of wonder can it be, that wants both the Major and me? I thought our acquaintance had been all separate visitors.

Enter the SERVANT, *with* MR ANTHONY EUSTON *following.*

La. Har. Mr Anthony Euston!—(*Mr Anthony salutes her.*)—Is it possible I shou'd have the honour of a visit from *you?*

Mr Ant. My dear lady, and why *not?* What, you heard, I suppose, I was lost;—but have not you heard again that I was found?

La. Har. No, upon my word, Sir; and the sight of you amazes me.

Mr Ant. Was not my brother here this morning?

La. Har. No, Sir.

Mr Ant. Nor did not your husband expect me?

La. Har. No, indeed, Sir!

Mr Ant. My brother not here to tell your husband of our safety, after all the perils of shipwreck, imprisonment, and a story fit for a romance!

Lady Har. Is Mr Euston too return'd safe?

Mr Ant. Certainly.—'Tis strange he has not been here before me! Where is your husband?

Lady Har. Did you ask for him when you came in?

Mr Ant. Yes, I asked the servant if his master was at home, but he returned and said, no;—so I

then asked him for his mistress—and here I find you, my dear lady, as beautiful as ever! But where is my nephew? I am all impatience till I see him.

Lady Har. (*Aside.*) He does not know what has happened, I find.

Mr Ant. What is the matter, my dear?

Lady Har. You are just arrived from abroad, Sir?

Mr Ant. Only left the ship yesterday morning, came to London late in the evening, and, not having had a night's rest on shore for many months, went to bed as soon as I arrived; and, as soon as I rose this morning, came with my respects to you.

Lady Har. Then you have seen no acquaintance since you came to town?

Mr Ant. You are the first. Can you suppose I shou'd visit any one before I had seen you; or do you think any of my friends wou'd find me out the very night of my arrival.

Lady Har. And have you met with none of your English aquaintance while you have been abroad—nor read any of our English newspapers?

Mr Ant. I have seen neither since I left England. —Indeed, when I am at a distance from my friends, as I hate to be imposed on, I seldom ask a question concerning them, and never read a paragraph where their names are mention'd.

Enter COLONEL DOWNRIGHT.

Col. Down. I beg your Ladyship's pardon—I thought the Major had been here;—he promised he wou'd go with me into the city on some business—He is not gone out, I hope?

Lady Har. Mr Euston, you will excuse me a moment—I will send (*To the Colonel*) the Major to you immediately, Sir. (*Aside.*) Let him explain to Mr Euston—the task wou'd be too much for me.

Mr. Ant. My fellow traveller! Have you forgot me? (*Going up to the* COLONEL.)

Col. Down. My good friend! Is it you?—I am heartily glad to see you—I thought it *was* you? and then again—Where is my friend your brother? Why you got to town before me—I am glad to meet you, faith!—So unexpectedly too!

Enter MAJOR CYPRUS, *and bows to* MR ANTHONY.

Major Cyp. Colonel, I beg your pardon; I am afraid I have tired your patience?

Col. Down Not at all—Sir Harry Harmless has been an excellent companion, but he has just left me. (*To Mr Anthony*) I shou'd have call'd on you in the afternoon—Who wou'd have thought of meeting you here?

Mr Ant. Why faith, Colonel, I do not know a more likely place to find a man at, than a relation's house.

Col. Down. What, are the Major and you related?

Mr Ant. Sir!

Major Cyp. Have I the honour of being related to you, Sir? (*Bowing.*)

Mr Ant. Not that I know of, Sir.— (*Bowing.*)

Major Cyp. If Lady Harriet has that honour, Sir, I presume to claim the same.

Mr Ant. You are related to Lady Harriet then, Sir?

Major Cyp. By very close ties.—

Mr Anthony. Sir I shall be happy to be better acquainted.

Col. Down. (*Aside to the* MAJOR.) Tell him the story of the closet—Egad 'twill make him laugh.

Major Cyp. (*Aside to the* COLONEL.) Fy, fy! He is a relation of my wife's.

Col. Down. (*Aside.*) He wou'd not like a good story the worse for that.—Would you, Mr Anthony, have any dislike to a good story?

Mr Ant. A story, Sir?—

Col. Down. Ay, a good story of a—a—zounds "I'll tell you what!" and "an undescribable something!"—

Major Cyp. For shame, for shame, Colonel!

Mr Ant. Why, my fellow traveller, you are at your jokes; the same as ever, I find. What is all this?

Major Cyp. Nothing, Sir; nothing, I assure you.

Col. Down. As good a story as ever was told. Tell it, Major; I wou'd, but I cannot *look* it as you do. Egad, you *look* it to the life.

Mr Ant. Well, gentlemen, I should be very happy to hear this story, but I am obliged to defer it till some other time. I have waited for Sir George as long as possible, and, as I find he does not come, I'm resolved to go in search of him—So, gentlemen, your humble servant. If I meet with Sir George, I shall return, I dare say, immediately; and, if not, I shall certainly call in the afternoon. My compliments to her ladyship—Your servant, gentlemen.

Maj. Cyp. Pray, Sir, who did you expect to meet here?

Mr Ant. Only Sir George, Sir.

Major Cyp. What Sir George, pray, Sir?

Mr Ant. Sir George Euston, Sir.

Major Cyp. Sir George Euston, Sir! Did you expect to meet Sir George Euston *here?*

Mr Ant. Certainly I did, Sir.

Col. Down. That's all for want of hearing the story.—Do, my good friend, come back and hear the story of the "undescribable something,"—and of the closet—that little closet—and, "I'll tell you what!"

Major Cyp. Colonel, permit me to speak seriously to the gentleman.—Sir, (*to Mr Anthony*) you will never see Sir George Euston in this house, I am certain.

Mr Ant. How so, pray Sir?

Major Cyp. I am now master of this house, and—

Mr Ant. You are master of this house!

Major Cyp. Yes, Sir.

Col. Down. He took possession of the closet, some time ago.

Mr Ant. But pray, Sir, does not Lady Harriet Euston then live here?

Major Cyp. That lady is no longer Lady Harriet Euston, Sir, but Cyprus: she is my wife.

Col. Down. You have spoiled the whole story, by beginning at the wrong end.

Mr. Ant. You astonish me!—I beg your pardon: I came but last night from the West Indies, where I have been for some time, and where not the smallest intelligence from England has ever reached me; therefore you will excuse my ignorance. But I think her ladyship, knowing how great a stranger I was, ought to have dealt a little more openly with me.

Major Cyp. I dare say, Sir, her ladyship——

Mr Ant. Yes, I suppose her ladyship was unwilling to be the first to acquaint me with the death of Sir George.

Major Cyp. The death of Sir George, Sir.

Mr Ant. Yes, Sir; for, while I give you joy on your marriage, give me leave to say, that mine is all damped by the loss of him: And my grief is doubly poignant; because, till this moment, I was not only unacquainted with Lady Harriet's second marriage, but, till this moment, I did not even know Sir George was dead!

Major Cyp. Sir George is not dead, Sir.

Mr Ant. What do you mean? Did you not tell me you were married to his wife?

Major Cyp. Very true, Sir; but you know that is no reason, now-a-days, why the lady's first husband should be dead.

Col. Down. Why, my brother messmate, you are just like me—I had forgot that a man in England might marry his neighbour's wife, and his neighbour living in the next street. And 'tis not the wives of their neighbours, only, these generous gentlemen assail, but more especially the wives of their *friends.*

Mr Ant. Shame on such friendship! Shame on such neighbourhood! Let every tender husband and virtuous wife desert it! (*To the Major.*) Sir, I wish you joy; and, though I know not who are the parties to be censured in this business, I wish her ladyship joy—But more, in particular, I wish *myself* joy, with the sincerest congratulation, that, amidst the depravity of the times, I have followed a beloved wife to her peaceful grave, (mournful as the day was) without seeing her wrested from my arms by the insinuations of a villain: or being myself that villain to force her to seek a refuge from my perjuries, in the protection of another!

Major Cyp. Dear Sir, let me assure you that, however Lady Harriet's conduct may meet censure from the unfeeling prude, the woman of sensibility and taste must applaud her spirit, which could no longer submit to the tyranny of Sir George.

Mr Ant. Did her Ladyship then sue for the divorce?

Major Cyp. No—Sir George, on some frivolous suspicion, was pleased to sue for it.

Mr Ant. Is Sir George married again?

Major Cyp. Yes, Sir, he is married. He has won the lady, and he has won her fortune; but for her affection—there, I believe, we must excuse Sir George—that is a stake now playing for by many noblemen of fashion.

Mr Ant. I suspect Sir George is the dupe of a fashionable gallantry. I know his virtues, and am sorry to find a man of merit so betrayed.

Major Cyp. Dear Sir, think on Lady Harriet, your relation.

Mr Ant. Thank heaven, all ties between Lady Harriet and me were dissolved when she was divorced from Sir George: and so they should, Sir, had she been my own daughter, and Sir George, with the principles I know he possesses, an utter stranger to me.

Col. Down. Why then, I believe, my friend, you are *not* at a relation's house.

Mr Ant. Colonel, you will call on me shortly.—Sir, (Mr Cyprus, I think you call yourself,) I assure you, Sir, as a particular friend of my nephew's, and of the family in general, I am, Sir, your most obedient servant—your humble servant, Sir. (*With contempt.*) [*Exit* MR ANTHONY.

Major Cyp. For heaven's sake! who is this man? I took him to be Lady Harriet's uncle! Explain to me who the brute is.

Col. Down. He came passenger from the West Indies in the same ship with me, and that was the first of our acquaintance. As he was no more reserved than I, we soon became intimate; and I learnt from him that his fortune, (a pretty good one) was designed for a nephew, whom I now recollect, (tho' the deuce take me if I thought of it before) to be this very Sir George Euston; and a son, an only child, by that wife he speaks so tenderly of, he disinherits.

Major Cyp. This is the very savage I heard Lady Harriet say the other day was drown'd. What, has his son been guilty of the criminality of a divorce?

Col. Down. No; his guilt is in being married—married to some poor girl, without friends or fortune. Thank heaven, I have neither child nor wife to offend me; but, if I had, I don't know which I would make the most obedient.

Major Cyp. And were you never a lover, Colonel? Never in the service of the ladies?

Col. Down. O yes—I have been in a closet before now—and under a bed, too; but then I was never pull'd out by a *husband;* and, on a discovery, I could always describe the something that brought me there.

Major Cyp. By heaven! you are so taken with that joke, I cannot reserve that which I before hinted at from you any longer: Rat me if I have not an appointment for to-morrow evening with Euston's *other* wife! Is it not the most impudent thing of me—

Col. Down. I'll be shot if I dont think so!

Major Cyp. The poor fellow thinks her as chaste as Diana; and so she is at present, as far as I know. I was happy in her favour a few years ago; but marriage not being then convenient, my passion was postponed. On her becoming Euston's wife, I renewed my addresses, and she has kindly allotted tomorrow evening for our first *tête-à-tête.*

Col. Down. Zounds, have a care, or you will be obliged to marry *her* too.

Major Cyp. No, no; we shall be very circumspect in our conduct. But laugh! Why the devil don't you laugh!

Col. Down. No, I was thinking—

Major Cyp. On what?

Col. Down. Come, I must be gone, or I shall be too late for my business.

Major Cyp. I'll attend you immediately. But what were you thinking on?

Col. Down. I was thinking on the happiness—of a married man.

[*Exeunt* COLONEL DOWNRIGHT *and* MAJOR CYPRUS.

ACT THE THIRD

SCENE I.

A Room at Sir George Euston's.

Enter Mr Euston *and* Sir George.

Mr Eus. Bless my soul! Bless my soul! Why, what did my brother Anthony say? Was not he in a dreadful passion? Only think of *his* being made such a fool of! It would not have signified had it been *me*. It had been a good joke if the mistake had happened to me; then you wou'd have had something to have laughed at.

Sir Geo. Dear Sir, let us think no more about it —my uncle has listened to reason, and approves my conduct in every circumstance.

Mr Eus. Ay, 'tis very well, George—'tis all very well—but I know, had you been his son, he wou'd not have forgiven you—he loved that boy so well, he wou'd never forgive him the smallest fault.

Sir Geo. A very cruel proof of his affection.

Mr Eus. 'Tis true, notwithstanding—you know it is. Poor Charles! George, you must do something for him—You know your uncle won't—and I am tied from it by a solemn promise. Many a letter and petition came from his wife to my brother and me, before we went abroad, but all in vain; for I had but just then given Anthony my word, and wou'd not equivocate, by causing the poor boy or his family to be relieved, in any shape, through

my means; and therefore I forebore to mention their distress to you. However, now, though I have not forgot my promise, I will not be so *particular* about it; and, when the deviation from my word disturbs my conscience, I'll hush it to rest with having relieved a destitute family.

Sir Geo. Say no more, Sir; I understand you—and to find out my cousin and his family shall immediately be my care.

Mr Eus. (Shaking hands with Sir George.) That's right, George—Poor Charles is a lieutenant in the East Indies. His wife must be the first object of your bounty. Just before I left England, she wrote me a letter from a village near York—where he left her, with two children, and she styles them, in her letter, "the offspring of want and wretchedness." I was a hard-hearted fellow, not to listen to her complaint; but, I think, since I have been at sea, I have been more compassionate. I never knew, before, what it was to be cold or hungry.

Sir Geo. Can you tell me the name of the village, Sir, where I am to seek her?

Mr Eus. Write to her at the post office, Selby. If she should have left the place, they may still know where to send her letters. I wish some friend, that had not made a promise, would speak to my brother Anthony about them at present; perhaps, going to sea has changed his heart too.

Sir Geo. No, Sir; I touched on that subject when I was with him this morning.

Mr Eus. Did you? Did you? And what did he say?

Sir Geo. Asked if I meant to make him forbid me his sight—and, on my apologising, commanded me never to mention my poor cousin in his hearing again.

Mr Eus. Ay, that is what I must never do—

Well, so much the better; for now, George, neiyou nor I can tell tales one of another.

Sir Geo. You are right, Sir. Had my uncle Anthony an estate to bestow on each of his family, he could not exact more obedience to his will than he does at present.

Mr Eus. 'Tis very true, George. But what keeps him so long away? I expected he wou'd have been with your lady before this time, acknowledging her for his niece: though, they have had one meeting, it seems.

Sir Geo. My uncle cannot be introduced to Lady Euston till to-morrow, Sir. Lord Layton, for whom he settled some business when he was abroad, called on him just as I came away, and, as his lordship is going to Italy in a day or two, he entreated my uncle to accompany him immediately to his country house, (about ten miles from town) in order to look over some papers he has there.

Mr Eus. Here comes your lady, so I'll leave you.

Enter LADY EUSTON.

La. Eus. Dear Mr Euston, I hope I do not frighten you away—Sir George will be offended with me if I do.

Mr Eus. No, madam—I am sure no man cou'd be offended at being left in such charming company. [*Exit Mr Euston.*

Sir Geo. My uncle is grown a man of gallantry!

La. Eus. Yes, I inspire all the men.

Sir Geo. I believe you do.

La. Eus. Cou'd I only inspire you with reason to listen to my arguments—

Sir Geo. 'Tis in vain—The Major shall now feel my resentment. Did he imagine, because I was indifferent to the conduct of an *undeserving* woman,

that I am not to be roused at such an injury as this? An attempt on the principles of a woman of virtue! 'Tis done on purpose to try me, and by Heaven he shall find—That wretch too, Sir Harry!

L. Eus. Oh, pray have pity on poor Sir Harry.

Sir Geo. No, madam. I only defer my resentment till I have had some conversation with my uncle Anthony.

L. Eus. Do, my dear Sir George, suffer me to revenge my own cause this once—and ever after—

Sir Geo. I positively must!

L. Eus. Nay, Sir George, in a year or two, may, perhaps, have no objection to your fighting a duel; but only three months married—I do wish to keep you a little longer.

Sir Geo. Depend upon it, Lady Euston, death had never half the terrors I have beheld it with since I called you mine; but that life you have endeared to me——

L. Eus. You wou'd throw away immediately in my service. No, no, Sir George, a fond wife will never suffer her husband to revenge her wrongs at so great a risk: Besides, the exertion of a little *thought* and *fancy*, will more powerfully vindicate innocence, than that brilliant piece of steel, I assure you.

Sir Geo. Perhaps you are right.

L. Eus. Certainly I am! Now, suppose a gentleman makes love to me—I divulge the affront to you; you call my insulter to an account—*Your* ball misses; he fires into the air; and, to the fame of having dared to wound your honour, he gains that of presenting you with your life.

Sir Geo. But, why must these circumstances take place?

L. Eus. Well, then, we will suppose he kills you; how do you like that?

Sir Geo. (Smiling.) Hem!

L. Eus. Or, we will suppose, you kill him—even how do you like *that?*

Sir Geo. Well, I confess that, if a severe punishment could be thought of, for such insolence—

L. Eus. There is as severe a punishment to men of gallantry, (as they call themselves,) as sword or pistol: laugh at them; that is a ball which cannot miss; and yet kills only their vanity.

Sir Geo. You are right.

L. Eus. Let me see; we have been now only three months married; and, in that short time, I have had no less than five or six men of fashion to turn into ridicule. The first who ventured to declare his passion, was Lord William Bloomly; his rank, joined to his uncommon beauty, had insured him success; and wherever I went, I was certain to hear his distress whispered in my ear; at every opportunity he fell even upon his knees; and, as a tender earnest of my pity for him, begged, with all the eloquence of love, for "a single lock of my hair, which he wou'd value more than any other woman's person; the wealth of worlds; or (he is a great patriot you know,) even the welfare of his country."

Sir Geo. I am out of patience!

L. Eus. You will be more so—For I promised him this single lock.

Sir Geo. You did not!

L. Eus. But I did; and added, with a blush, that I must insist on a few hairs from one of his eyebrows in return; which he absolutely refused;—and, on my urging it, was obliged to confess, "he valued that little brown arch more than the lock he had been begging for; consequently, more than any woman's person; the wealth of worlds; or even the

welfare of his country." I immediately circulated this anecdote, and exhibited the gentleman, both as a gallant and a patriot; and now his lordship's eyebrow, which was once the admiration, is become the ridicule of every drawing room.

Sir Geo. Your ladyship then wou'd not menace your lover?

L. Eus. Certainly not; "You are the most beautiful woman I ever saw," said Lord *Bandy;* "and your lordship is positively the most lovely of mankind."—"What eyes," cried he; "what hair," cried I; "what lips," continued he;" "what teeth," added I; "what a hand and arm," said he; "and what a *leg* and foot," said I;—"Your ladyship is jesting," was his lordship's last reply; and he has never since even paid me one compliment. Prudes censure my conduct; I am too free—while their favourite, Lady Strenuous, in another corner of the ball-room, cries to *her* admirer—"Desist, my lord, or my dear Sir Charles shall know that you dare thus to wound my ears with your licentious passion; if you ever presume to breathe it again, I will acquaint him with it—depend upon it I will. *(Sighs and languishes.)* Oh! you have destroyed my peace of mind for ever."

Sir Geo. There are too many such ladies, but no such wou'd I hazard my life for—that I have proved.

L. Eus. And, upon my word, Sir George, even the virtuous wife, who wou'd not have some regard to her husband's *life,* as well as his *honour,* if I were a gentleman, I should not feel myself under many obligations to.

Sir Geo. You wou'd protect both?

L. Eus. And the guilty not escape. Now, (with your consent,) what must be the confusion, shame, and disappointment, of my two masked lovers to-

morrow evening; the brutal audacity of one, and insignificance of the other; both beneath *your* resentment, yet deserving objects of mine. And, indeed, Sir George, it is my fixed opinion, that, the man who wou'd endeavour to wrong a virtuous wife, shou'd be held too despicable for the resentment of the husband, and only worthy the debasement inflicted by our sex. I have already sent a letter to Sir Harry, with the appointment at the masquerade, and the Major has my promise of a meeting at the same time. Come, come, Sir George, it is the first petition I ever presented; do not refuse me!

Sir Geo. Give me till the morning to consider of it?

L. Eus. With all my heart; and in the mean time reflect on this—that, in regard to your terrible sex, whether as licentious lovers or valiant champions—women, of *real honour*, are not in danger from the one; and, therefore, like me, ought to forego the assistance of the other.

[*Exeunt Lady Euston and Sir George.*

SCENE II.

A Room at COLONEL DOWNRIGHT'S.

Enter COLONEL DOWNRIGHT *and* MR ANTHONY EUSTON.

Col. Down. My good friend, I was just going to bed; but I am glad of your company, though I did not expect it.

Mr Ant. Colonel, my errand at this time was merely to ask a favour of you.

Col. Down. Command it, and you will make me proud.

Mr Ant. Why then, Colonel, with Lord Layton to-day, (at whose house I dined,) a circumstance happened, on which account I expect his lordship will call on me to-morrow for a fashionable satisfaction; and though, depend upon it, I wish for no such rash means of ending a dispute; yet, if his lordship *shou'd* call upon me, 'tis fit I be prepared with a second; and I thank you for the friendly assurance you have now given me of your service.

Col. Down. You are as welcome to it—I was going to say, as my king; but, zounds, if I shou'd be killed in a pitiful quarrel at home, I shou'd blush even in my grave; for, when I die, I hope to have my knell rung by the groans of a score or two of our country's treacherous foes.

Mr Ant. The service I shall put you to, Colonel, will not prevent that hope.

Col. Down. But what, for Heaven's sake, has brought you into a quarrel?

Mr Ant. The cause of our quarrel was—you will call it a very trivial one, I dare say—a woman!

Col. Down. Why, my old friend, you have not been quarrelling about a woman—Oh, if I shou'd be killed for a woman, I shou'd cut a noble figure, indeed?

Mr Ant. Hear me, Colonel, hear me—and, as you may question my prudence, let me tell you the whole adventure.

Col. Down. Nay, nay, I did not mean to question your prudence, nor to speak against the women either. I like them as well as you do.

Mr Ant. I own I have a respect for their sex, which unites me to them as their father, their friend, and admirer. And I beg you will give me your sen-

timents upon the character of one whose behaviour, this day, has surprised me beyond measure; I will describe it to you, and you will then tell me whether you believe me imposed upon, or whether you think she really claims that extraordinary attention I have, some how, been compelled to give her.

Col. Down. Well, let me hear.

Mr Ant. Lord Layton and I had no sooner plac'd ourselves in his lordship's coach, than he exclaim'd, he had just seen the most beautiful girl his eyes ever beheld, to whom he had given a look of solicitation, and that she was returning her answer by making up to the coach. He begged a thousand pardons, but, with my permission, (as he expected no other company at his country house,) he wou'd take her down to dine with us. I, knowing his lordship well, (and the girl being now arrived at the coach door) reluctantly assented, and she was immediately handed in.

Col. Down. Zounds, he shou'd have taken a companion for you too!

Mr Ant. Don't interrupt me. When she had been seated about a minute, I cast my eyes upon her—

Col. Down. 'Sdeath, I shou'd not have staid half so long.

Mr Ant. I was struck with her beauty—

Col. Down. And wish'd his lordship out of the way, I suppose.

Mr Ant. No, no; there was a sensibility in her countenance that amazed me; blushes on her cheeks; tears in her eyes. When his lordship spoke to her, she answered him with a forced smile, and a tremor on her voice. She avoided all conversation; and, when we alighted, I handed her out of the coach.

Col. Down. Ay, ay, I thought how it was.

Mr Ant. You misunderstand me. I perceived her hand tremble—

Col. Down. And so, I suppose, did yours.

Mr Ant. If you interrupt me, sir, you shall hear no more.

Col. Down. And, I believe, it will be for your credit if I don't.

Mr Ant. Let me tell you all that passed.

Col. Down. With all my heart—if you don't blush at it, I shan't.

Mr Ant. I believe her to be a woman of virtue.

Col. Down. Then what the devil were my lord and you—

Mr Ant. I have rescued her from him.

Col. Down. Why then, the deuce take me if you are not more in love than I thought you were.

Mr Ant. Oh, had you seen her countenance, so expressive of anguish! The hope with which she lifted up her eyes to me, for deliverance! The horror painted in her face, when I left the room! Heard her piercing cries, that called me back to her protection? The despair and earnest supplication that hung upon her tongue, while she entreated him to view her, not as an object of *love*, but *charity!* The grief! the pathetic tenderness with which she declared herself, "a virtuous, though forsaken wife! A poor, indigent, forlorn mother; perishing, with her children,—for whose sake she had been tempted by the first lure that offered (prompted by more than common grief,) to add the sense of guilt to all her other miseries!"

Col. Down. 'Sdeath—

Mr Ant. Cou'd I? Ought I to have gone and left her?

Col. Down. Left her! No. But what did you do?

Mr Ant. Returned to the chamber, and insisted on his lordship resigning her to me.

Col. Down. And did he?

Mr Ant. She hung upon me; and, in spite of his menaces, I led her to my coach, (which was then come for me,) and brought her safe away.

Col. Down. I hope she got safe home too.

Mr Ant. Perfectly so. As her tears interrupted her, whenever she attempted to tell me where she lived, or explain any circumstance of her life to me, I asked no questions, but took her to my own house—desired my house-keeper to show her an apartment, and treat her with attention—and, promising to see and speak with her in the morning, left her to the repose which she must greatly want.

Col. Down. And now you think his lordship will send *you* to repose for all this.

Mr Ant. He may attempt it, for which I wish to be prepared.

Col. Down. Well then, here is my hand; and, though I must acknowledge that you have had too little of the man of the world about you in the business, yet, as I said before, command me.

Mr Ant. Come then, Colonel, my coach is waiting for me at the door; will you go with me to the next coffee-house? I have to meet a gentleman there on a little business; and afterwards we will enjoy half an hour's conversation together.

Col. Down. With all my heart.

[*Exeunt* MR ANTHONY *and* COLONEL.

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

A Room at MR ANTHONY EUSTON'S.

Enter MR EUSTON.

Mr Eus. Wonders will never cease! Who wou'd have thought it! Why surely it cannot be! My brother Anthony to bring home a girl!—What wou'd he have said to *me* if I had done such a thing? For my part, I never durst think of such a thing. Perhaps it is some neighbour's child! But if she is—the servant tells me she is very handsome, and Anthony wou'd not bring her home without some meaning. What wou'd my nephew George say to this? Why he would not believe it! He wou'd a great deal sooner believe it of me. And yet, I—I!—Lord bless me—how people may be mistaken! Here he comes.

Enter MR ANTHONY.

Mr Ant. Brother, good morning to you. Have you seen George this morning?

Mr Eus. No, brother.

Mr Ant. Are you going there?

Mr Eus. I believe I shall be presently, brother.

Mr Ant. (Sitting down.) Perhaps he may call here first.

Mr Eus. (*Sitting down.*) Perhaps he may, brother.

(Mr Anthony appears thoughtful, and leans on the table.)

Mr Eus. (After a long pause, and with significant looks.) It was a fine moon-shining night, last night.

Mr Ant. Yes, a fine night.

Mr Eus. (After another pause.) And 'tis a very fine day, to-day.

Mr Ant. Yes—it is.

Mr Eus. We have very fine weather, indeed.

Mr Ant. We have.—You have breakfasted, I suppose?

Mr Eus. Yes—and so, I suppose, have you?

Mr Ant. Yes, some time.—*(He begins writing.)*

Mr Eus. I interrupt you, brother—but I am going.—(*Rises.*)

Mr Ant. No, you do not. But tell Sir George, if you should see him, that I cannot call on him this morning, because I shall be busy.

Mr Eus. You shall be busy!

Mr Ant. Yes, I have got a little business to settle.

Mr Eus. To be sure, *business* must be minded.

Mr Ant. But be particular in delivering my apology, for I wou'd not have his lady affronted.

Mr Eus. One wou'd not affront a *lady* to be sure. No—no—no!

Mr Ant. I wou'd not have her think I slight her.

Mr Eus. No! I am sure you wou'd not slight a lady! (*He coughs.*) Good morning, brother!

Mr Ant. Good morning.

Mr Eus. We shall see you, perhaps, when your *business* is done! Good morning, brother.

[*Exit* MR EUSTON, *coughing.*

Mr Anthony pulls a letter out of his pocke

Mr Ant. Yes, here is the challenge; and, truly, something noble in it. He applauds my taking away the lady, but says my manner was too rough. I must retract some words. My lord, that cannot be. (*Puts up the letter.*) And now for a few bequests to my relations, in case his lordship should prove victorious. It is well my will is already made—for he has scarcely given me time to—(*He writes, then throws down the pen.*) What paternal weakness! (*Rises.*) How strange it is, altho' I *have* resisted, and *can*, with manly firmness, resist every innate pleading for that ungrateful boy I once called my son; that careless prodigal of a father's peace, and his own welfare—yet—when I consider myself as shortly to be an inhabitant of another world, and without the power to assist him—I wish—I wish—What?—Why, that heaven may then raise him up a friend to deal more gently with him than I have done. A friend, whose temper, whose *place* it better may become to forgive his faults than an offended father. (*He takes the paper.*) In vain are the strugglings of nature. Justice—example—and my word irrevocably past, silence its pretences. (*He seals the paper, directs it, and looks at his watch.*) The time is almost expired, and I must pay a short visit to my new lodger, and be gone.—John!

Enter SERVANT.

Mr Ant. Is not this the time that the lady gave me permission to wait on her?

Serv. The lady sent word she wou'd wait on you, sir. This is the time; and, sir, she is coming.

Mr Ant. Shew her in. [*Exit Servant.*

(*Mr Anthony walks two or three turns, and then the lady is shewn in.*)

Mr Ant. I hope, madam, my message did not disturb you?

Lady. Not at all, sir. I had asked permission to see you before I received it. *(He draws chairs, and they sit.)*

Mr Ant. Well, madam—Unless you have enquired of the servants, you are yet a stranger to my name and connections.

Lady. I am a stranger to them, sir. But your humanity must ever be engraved on my heart.

Mr Ant. Then, madam, for the service you are pleased to acknowledge I have rendered you, all I request, in return, is your confidence. Explain clearly to me the circumstances, the temptations that brought you into the situation from whence I released you! Declare them with frankness, and tax my humanity yet further; it shall not forsake you. To encourage you to this confession, my name is——

Lady. Hold, Sir! That is an information I cannot return—therefore let us wave it; and as I can remain grateful for your goodness, without knowing to *whom* I am indebted, so pity still my weakness, and my miseries, without a further knowledge of the wretched sufferer.

Mr Ant. Madam, you have imposed on me a task too hard. 'Tis true you have won my pity; but 'tis fit you shou'd *secure* it too. And while explanations are reserved, *Doubt*, that hardener of the human heart, must be your enemy.

Lady. Alas! (*Risces.*)

Mr Ant. Come—I wish not to exact too much; but I am a *man*, madam, and with every frailty incident to the species: *suspicion* has its place.

Lady. I know I am an object of suspicion; but you are deceived in me—indeed you are. Guilt never *harboured* in my heart. Maternal tenderness, for two helpless infants, hurried me in a moment to

do I know not what, rather than lose them: A deed! the horror of which (altho' by the mercy of eternal Providence, I have escaped its direst consequences,) must ever cover me with blushes; and, shou'd indulgent heaven reserve me for a meeting with my husband, must, with remorse, damp every joy the fond, fond interview would give!

Mr. Ant. Be comforted. (*Leading her to her seat.*) I mean not to increase, but soothe your grief. Tell me but *who* you are, and *why* thus abandoned by all your relations, friends, and husband? I can excuse the feelings of a mother—the sudden starts, or rather madness of resolution, formed by the excessive anguish of the soul. Trust me, I can deal tenderly with human failings. No frivolous curiosity, but a desire to serve you, thus urges me to entreat you will *unfold* yourself.

Lady. Oh, Sir, I have a husband, *I think*, who loves me. Once I am sure he did. *My* heart has never stray'd from *him*, since our fatal union. What must that poor heart suffer, torn with remorse for the rash step my mad despair suggested to preserve my children? Oh! in my bosom let his name lie hid, that none may know his wretched fortune in a hapless wife.

Mr Ant. Your reasons have satisfied me. I do not ask your name. Tell me but the *circumstances* that drove you to the state from whence I released you: Be so far explicit, and I will ask no more.

Lady. Most willingly! When first my husband saw me, I was friendless. Compassion caused his love for me—Gratitude mine for him. Forlorn and destitute, no kind relation, no tender benefactor taught my heart affection. Unused to all the little offices of kindness, could they but endear the object who bestowed them? Sense of obligation, never before excited, pressed on my thoughts, and soon was

changed to love. He scorned to violate the heart that was his own, and we were married.

Mr Ant. I find no room for accusation here. Go on—go on, madam. What has alienated your husband from you, and left you thus destitute at present? If you can resolve me that; if you still have acted with equal propriety, I am your friend—I have no censure for you.

Lady. But you will condemn my husband; even I must own he was to blame. Born of wealthy parents, the heir to large possessions, and I to none, when he married, all were given up, and he changed his state for mine. We had no friend, but in each other; yet happy was that state to *me*, till poverty surprised us; and the fond hope (which once he cherished) of paternal forgiveness, vanished from my husband. Then all our days were bitter as they had before been happy; tears were my only food, and sighs were his; even *reproach* I have endured from him, for making him the friendless wretch he call'd himself. Yet—yet, at our parting, oh! then he cancell'd all; for when the regiment, in which he served, was ordered from the kingdom, he hung upon me, clasped his poor children, begg'd our forgiveness for the thousand outrages distress at our misfortunes had caused him to commit; swore that affection for us, was the source of his impatience—prayed heaven to bless *us*, whatever might be his fate—nay, prayed that death might speedily be his doom, so that it turned his father's heart to us.

Mr Ant. And have you never applied to his father?

Lady. Yes, but all in vain; and two months since, hearing my husband was made prisoner, (and destitute of every relief and every hope while he remained so,) I left my children and came to London, resolved, in *person*, to supplicate his father's bounty;

when I learnt (dire news,) his father, visiting an estate abroad, was lost, and we left to despair.

Mr Ant. What do you say?

Lady. Nay, do not blame him; I pardon him from my soul. And as my husband, spite of his disobedience, loved him tenderly, I will ever give a tear in tribute to his memory.

Mr Ant. Without hesitation!—without the smallest reserve, tell me your husband's name! Is it Euston?

Lady. It is!

Mr Ant. His father is not dead! He lives, and pardons him this moment! (*Embracing her.*)

Mrs Eus. *You* are his father! I know it! I see it in your looks! (*Kneeling.*)

Mr Ant. And you shall henceforth see it in my actions! Rise, rise, and behold (*Taking the paper from his pocket,*) where I this moment again disown'd him for my son, while the poor of every kind (except himself) I ever styled my children—Oh! charity, partially dealt, never more receive that heavenly virtue's title. Here (*Pointing to the paper.*) I provide for you as a poor stranger, who never asked, and might not have deserved my bounty; while, as a daughter, begging for an alms, I shut my heart, and sent your supplications back. Where was the merit of my thousands given, while one poor wretch, from proud resentment, petitioned me in vain?

Mrs Eus. I dare not call myself your daughter!

Mr Ant. You *are* my daughter; and, when I have supplicated heaven to pardon my neglect of you, I'll ask your pardon, too. You *are* my daughter—and let the infamy you have escaped serve only to make you more amiable; make you compassionate—compassionate to your own weak sex, in *whatsoever* suffering state you see them—They all were virtuous *once*, as well as you—and, had they met a father,

might have been saved like you. For me—(*Pulls out his watch.*) Bless me, how has the time flown!—My dear, I have an engagement I cannot postpone above half an hour; and that time I must dedicate to——Now, methinks, I wou'd wish to live. (*Aside.*) Retire to your chamber. I will, if possible, be with you speedily.—Where your husband is, and in what poor place your children, I am impatient till I know; but now I cannot wait. Retire, my child. May we meet again in safety. (*He leads her to the door, and she withdraws.*)

Mr Ant. Now where's the Colonel? I have just time to draw up a writing for him to sign when he arrives; and I'll about it instantly. Oh! with what transport does the human heart dislodge the unnatural guests, malice, and resentment, to take to its warm recesses the mild inhabitant, peaceful Charity. Yet even more welcome is the returning virtue, when thus 'tis strengthened by parental fondness. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at MAJOR CYPRUS'.

Enter LADY HARRIET, *and* BLOOM, *meeting.*

La. Har. What success? Will Sir George come? What a tedious time have you been gone!

Bloom. Dear madam, if you cou'd suppose how obstinate Sir George was; and how I had to beg, and to pray—

La. Har. But will he come?

Bloom. Yes, madam—at last he said he wou'd.

La. Har. Thank Heaven—Then I shall have the unspeakable joy of giving him this! (*Pulling out a letter.*)

Bloom. What, Sir George, madam? Well, I declare, I was at my wit's ends to know what you cou'd want with Sir George.

La. Har. To give him this letter, Bloom, from Lady Euston to the Major, which you so luckily found, and to have the extreme pleasure of informing him that I am not the only object deserving his resentment; but that even his wife of a few months—

she whom the world says he doats upon, and who has driven me from his remembrance, is indiscreet as I have been; to see with my own eyes his confusion—hear him reproach her conduct, and make him own—He promised he'd come?

Bloom. Yes, ma'am—but not till I knelt down and swore your ladyship was *dying*; suddenly taken ill; and cou'd not leave the world in peace till you had communicated something from your own lips to him.

La. Har. You did right; just as I ordered you—And what did he say to that?

Bloom. (*After a long pause.*) Why, he said,—"I will come to the poor unhappy wretch!"

La. Har. Wretch! Are you sure he said so?

Bloom. I am sure he said "Poor," and "unhappy," and then, you know, "wretch" follows of course.

La. Har. Who will be *most* wretched, in a few moments, he or I?

Bloom. Very true, madam; I believe he'll find he has not changed for the better.

La. Har. (*Looking at the letter.*) Confusion! What have you made me do? You told me this letter was for the Major; it is directed to Sir Harry Harmless.

Bloom. Oh that I shou'd not look at the direction!

La. Har. No matter; this is even a greater dishonour to Sir George than were it to the Major, and will wound him deeper—But where is the Major then? He will not be engaged as I supposed—and may return.

Bloom. Oh, no, my lady, that I dare say he won't—you need not fear; go into your chamber, madam, and make yourself easy till Sir George comes, and make yourself easy when he does come too; for, though the Major may not be with Lady Euston, I

dare say he has his appointments in some corner or another, as well as your ladyship. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Mr Anthony Euston's.

Enter Mr Anthony Euston *and* Colonel Downright.

Mr Ant. I have been waiting for you all day—What meant the few words in your letter? Why is my meeting with his lordship deferred?

Col. Down. I am just come from Lord Layton—a friend of his lordship's, knowing I was acquainted with you, called and took me there; and, to tell you the truth, I think this business between you and his lordship might be amicably and honourably settled—However, if you don't fight with *him*, you must fight with a mad-headed fellow I have left below—So which do you choose?

Mr Ant. What do you mean?

Col Down. Nay, you will have a worse chance than you wou'd have had with his lordship; for this man is a soldier, one who has been fighting for these four or five years past; besides, he's desperate—half mad; and has sworn, he'll either kill or be killed by you, *instantly.*

Mr Ant. Let him come—Who, and what is he? What has he to demand of me? (*Angrily.*)

Col. Down. Nay, don't be too violent neither—He's a poor unfortunate lad, I fancy; and, notwithstanding all his blustering—he now and then looks so heart-wounded, I cannot help pitying him.

Mr Ant. But what's his business? What is his quarrel with me?

Col. Down. Lord Layton is the innocent cause of it; he told the young man, who came to his lordship's (somewhat sooner than I did) in search of the lady whom you took away, that the lady had confessed herself poor; and even perishing for subsistence; and that, consequently, she was willing to resign herself to the most liberal; which, you proving, in spite of his lordship's generosity, you carried off the prize; and, egad, I owned it was what I had suspected, notwithstanding your grave countenance last night.

Mr Ant. You told him you thought so?

Col. Down. Yes; for I wished to turn the whole matter into a joke with his lordship; I did not think, at the time, that the young fellow wou'd have been so violent; for till this was explained he was as patient as a lamb; and only inquired, with *trembling* and *sighs*, for the lady; but, when he heard what I said, egad, he laid hold of me, and swore, till I brought him to my friend, the "unpitying, vile purchaser of innocence," (meaning you) he wou'd not quit me—So here he has followed me through the streets; and, on condition that he wou'd be patient while I came and announced him to you, I have promised him you shall give him satisfaction.

Mr Ant. What is this gentleman's name? (*Anxiously.*)

Col. Down. He did not tell us.

Mr Ant. Does he know mine?

Col. Down. No; I thought it most prudent not to

tell him; for, he is such a madman, he might have bawled it as we came in the streets.

Mr Ant. (*Much embarrassed.*) What is he to the lady? Her brother?—her cousin?

Col. Down. Why, faith, I've a notion, (though he did not say so,) I have a notion he is her husband.

Mr Ant. Indeed!—(*Starting.*)

Col. Down. Why you don't like the business the worse for that? 'Tis *crim. con.* now, and you'll be quite in the fashion.

Mr Ant. Let the young man come up; I'll withdraw for a moment; but do not give him to suppose I have *not* injured him.

Col. Down. That you may depend upon; I never tell a falsehood for myself, much less for another.

Mr Ant. Neither let him know my *name*. I'll first send the lady to him, and then return myself.

Col. Down. He's coming. [*Exit Mr Anthony.*

Charles. (*Without.*) Where is this gentleman?

Col. Down. Walk in here, sir.

Enter CHARLES EUSTON.

Col. Down. The man you wish to see—and whom you say has injured you—will be here and give you satisfaction immediately.

Cha. I thank him—Then I shall die and never see her more. (*Aside.*) Oh, sir! cooled with the restraint you have thus long imposed on me! I wish to ask a favour; I thought I was resolved never again to behold the wretch I have been deprived of; but, my rage for a moment gone, I cannot think of dying, and she so near me, without once looking on her; I have come far to see her—suffered much—crossed half the Eastern clime in poverty; have endured more pain, more toil, to gain my freedom, but to starve with her—and, dying, comfort her, than, had a throne been my waiting reward, my spirits could

have struggled with. And, after all, I feel, I feel I could be repaid with a mere look. Then, why refuse me? If I scape my antagonist, I have resolved on death! Let me then see her! I will not exchange a word with her—will they refuse her coming?

Col. Down. No—for here she is—

Enter MRS EUSTON, *and stops* (*with emotion*) *as soon as she enters.*

Mrs Eus. Oh! But I am commanded not to fly to your arms—I must not run to you, and tell you all I feel!

Cha. (*After a pause.*) I said—I thought—I wou'd not speak to you—but pity for your crimes and miseries compel me; and, I tell you, to alleviate your remorse, I *pardon you*—nay, perhaps, love you better, even in this agony of affliction, than if we had been blest with prosperous, virtuous days! I know what you have suffered! Your guilt convinces me! I want no other plea from a heart like yours. But where's your vile purchaser? My rage returns! I must die soon—but first in his breast! (*Draws his sword.*)

Col. Down. He's here!

Enter MR ANTHONY.

Cha. Then to his heart—(*Going to stab him, sees it is his father, and after a pause, falls on his knees.*) My father!

Mr Ant. Yes—I am the man, whose life you seek. And, as your father, you might pursue your purpose—But, as your wife's friend and preserver, still kneel to me; and receive her, virtuous, from my hands.

Cha. (*Embracing her.*) Virtuous! Virtuous!—O my father—Even groaning under your displeasure,

ever dear, and revered! What are you now, while heavenly consolation pours from your lips?

Col. Down. Father and son! Why, then there's to be no battle at last?

Mr. Ant. No—Hostilities are past—and may their future days know only peace! My son—(*Embracing him.*)

Cha. That tender name distracts me! Let me be more composed—prepared—before I experience such unexpected happiness. Maria, lead me from my father—Hereafter I will thank him; but now, I cannot.

Mrs Eus. Oh! Yes, my husband, kneel to him again!—Kneel for me! For your poor children! Saved from want and wretchedness! From being orphans! Kneel to him for us all!—preserved from infamy!

Cha. O spare the recollection—I feel too much! A poor, forsaken, desperate, dying man, restored to love, to life, to *him,* too—whose anger, (even while blest with thee,) plung'd me in constant sorrow. It is too much!

Mr Ant. I thought my heart had been—but—(*He faulters and wipes his eyes.*)

Col. Down. What? Do *you* weep?—Now, that affects me more than any thing that has been said or done yet. I don't like to see a woman cry, but I can't bear to see a man: a man's tears flow from so deep a source—they always appear to have come a long journey, and therefore I notice them as strangers, that have gone through fatigue, and trouble, on their way. While a woman's tears I consider as mere neighbours, that can call upon you when they like, and generally drop in on all occasions. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Major Cyprus'.

Enter LADY HARRIET *and* BLOOM.

La. Har. (*A loud rap.*) That is Sir George—Heavens!—

Bloom. Yes, my Lady, that it is—

La. Har. Heavens! What a sensation—How am I agitated at his approach! Cou'd I have thought, a few hours ago, I shou'd ever see him again?—Speak to him again! Oh this shame—

Bloom. Shame! Bless me! One does feel a little ashamed sometimes on seeing a stranger; but, my lady, Sir George is (as one may say) an *old acquaintance.*

La. Har. I must retire for a moment—Do you receive him—and, before I return, give him to understand that I am *not* dying; but will come to him immediately. [*Exit.*

Bloom. Well, now I declare I begin to be ashamed myself—Own all I swore to him on my knees was a falsehood? Why, what will he say? Dear me, I'm quite alarmed! I must retire for a moment too! (*Goes to the back of the stage. A servant shows Sir George in, and retires.*)

Sir Geo. How strange does it seem to me to find myself once more in this house, especially when I consider who resides here—Who? Perhaps, by this time, poor Lady Harriet is no more—How amiably

did my dear Lady Euston enforce her dying request —I doubted the *rectitude* of complying with it—but she surmounted all my scruples, and her tenderness and generosity have endeared her to me more than ever.

BLOOM *comes down.*

Sir Geo. How does Lady Harriet?

Bloom. As well as can be expected, sir.

Sir Geo. How!

Bloom. I hope you won't be angry, sir—but she's a *little* better.

Sir Geo. Angry! No; I am very glad to hear it!

Bloom. Are you indeed, sir? Why, then I believe she is a *great deal* better.

Sir Geo. Indeed! I am very glad; but then, if my attendance can be dispensed with—I may as well—

Major Cyp. (*Without.*) Let the chariot wait—perhaps, I may go out again.

Bloom. Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh!—that's the major—that's my master! my *other* master! Oh, what will become of us all?

Sir Geo. How unlucky!

Bloom. Sir! Dear sir, hide yourself!

Sir Geo. Hide!

Bloom. On my knees I beg—Consider my poor *dying* lady!

Major Cyp. (*On the stairs.*) Go with that note immediately.

Bloom. Here! in here, sir, for Heaven's sake. (*Opening the closet door.*)

Sir Geo. 'Sdeath! What shall I do? See *him?* Damnation! And see him *here* too? No, I can't bear it—I must avoid him.

(*Going towards the closet.*)

Bloom. Here, Sir—here quick! (*She puts Sir George into the closet, and shuts the door.*)

Bloom. There, there he is! thank Heaven! For, if my poor lady had lost the major, she might never have got a third husband. Lord bless me, I'm just as terrified as if I had never been used to these sort of things! [*Exit to Lady Harriet.*

Enter MAJOR CYPRUS.

Major Cyp. Ridiculed, baffled—laughed at—disappointed! How Sir George will enjoy this! A fine figure I cut on my knees to Sir Harry, when the colonel and his friends were shown in! And then my ridiculous vanity in wishing him to be unmasked, confidently expecting it was Euston's wife! Oh, damn it! I'll think no more of it; but as I am deprived the satisfaction of revenge on the lady abroad, I'll e'en torment my lady at home! (*Calls*) Lady Harriet——Lady Harriet.

Enter LADY HARRIET *and* BLOOM.

Major Cyp. What's the matter? You tremble—you look pale!

La. Har. (*Trembling.*) Tremble! Bless me—I've been fast asleep—and such a dream! I thought I was falling—

Bloom. Ay, my lady, I always dream of falling too!

La. Har. (*Yawns and rubs her eyes.*) How long have you been come home? What's o'clock? How long do you think I have slept, Bloom?

Bloom. I dare say, pretty near an hour and half, my lady.

La. Har. A miserable dull book—fell out of my hand! and I dropp'd insensibly—

Bloom. And with the candles so near your ladyship! I'm sure your ladyship was very lucky, you did not set yourself on fire!

Major Cyp. Aye; does your ladyship consider the danger with the lights so near you? You might have caught fire, and I shou'd have had all my valuable pictures, and library, consumed in an instant!

La. Har. And I consumed too.

Major Cyp. Aye—and your ladyship.

La. Har. Very true—but I am fond of reading melancholy books; that set me to sleep.

Major Cyp. Then I desire, for the future, you wou'd *not* read.

La. Har. And don't you desire I wou'd not sleep too! I'm very sorry you disturbed me.—Bloom, come and dispose the sofa, and the lights—I'm resolved I'll finish my nap.

Major Cyp. But, Mrs Bloom, first order the French horns up—I'm out of spirits. [*Exit Bloom.*

La. Har. And do you imagine your horns will disturb my repose? I shall like them of all things—they'll lull me to sleep.

Major Cyp. Like them or not—I will have them.

La. Har. You shall—you shall have them. (*Significantly.*) [*Exit.*

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Colonel Downright, Sir, with two gentlemen, strangers, desire to be admitted.

Major Cyp. (*Aside.*) What can bring them here? They dare not come to laugh at me! No matter—I'll see them. (*Aloud.*) Shew them up.

Enter COLONEL DOWNRIGHT, MR EUSTON, *and* MR ANTHONY EUSTON.

Col. Down. Major, these gentlemen, the Mr Euston's, have begged me to introduce them to you,

late as it is, on business in which they are materially—

Mr Ant. Sir—Major Cyprus, I beg your pardon—but I have received intelligence that my nephew, Sir George Euston, is in this house, and I am come to conduct him safe out of it.

Major Cyp. Sir!

Mr. Ant. In short, Sir—Sir George Euston has been, by some unwarrantable means, led to pay a visit here, and I cannot leave the house until I see him. If I should, my niece, Lady Euston, will be highly alarmed (knowing you are at home,) for her husband's safety.

Major Cyp. Sir George in this house! Ridiculous supposition!

Mr Eus. Call her ladyship's woman—She deliver'd the message of invitation—I shall know her again, for I saw her—and I saw Sir George soon after follow her.

Major Cyp. Bloom! Bloom! Where's Bloom?

Enter BLOOM.

Pray were you at Sir George Euston's to-day, or this evening?

Bloom. I! At Sir George Euston's, sir!

Mr Eus. Yes: I saw you there.

Bloom. Oh! Oh! Oh! (*crying*) Oh dear! I was not there indeed, sir!

Major Cyp. You see she denies it, and confirms the truth with her tears.

Mr Ant. I distrust them both—Both her truth and her tears.

Major Cyp. Come, come, Mr Anthony Euston, confess you were not brought hither to seek Sir George—Clear yourself, in your turn, from the suspicions I entertain of you. But, if you dare to

avow yourself the contriver, or even abettor of the affront offered me at the masquerade—

Mr Eus. Major Cyprus! My brother Anthony knew no more of the appointment at the masquerade, than the child unborn. But, bless you, my niece and we meant you no ill by it; we only meant to have a joke at your and Sir Harry's expense—that was all.

Major Cyp. Then give me leave to tell you, Mr Euston, and you also Mr Anthony, that your present visit—

Mr Ant. We understand you, Sir—only assure us that Sir George Euston is safe, and we'll leave your house immediately—

Major Cyp. I! assure you that Sir George Euston is safe!

Mr Ant. You seem surprised—Let me then speak a word with Lady Harriet, whom the servants tell me is at home. Is she or not?

Major Cyp. (*To a servant without.*) Desire your lady to come hither. But have a care, gentlemen, how far you provoke me by your suspicions! For, by Heaven—

Mr Ant. I have no fears but for Sir George—nor will now your utmost rage induce me to quit the house till I am assured of his safety.

Major Cyp. And pray, sir, *who* in this house is to assure you of it?

Sir Geo. (*Bursting from the closet.*)—Himself!

Major Cyp. Confusion!

Mr Ant. You see, Sir, my intelligence was good.

Sir Geo. Strange as my concealment may appear, the cause was such as I can with honour reveal.

Major Cyp. Then, pray sir, with "honour re-"veal it."

Sir Geo. Why then I assure you, major—and I assure you all—upon my honour—and on the word

of a gentleman—that my being here—was—entirely —owing—to—to—

Major Cyp. (*Warmly.*) To what? To what, sir?

Col. Down. "I'll tell you what"—to "an un-"describable something"—to be sure!

Major Cyp. Damnation!

Col. Down. Did not I tell you to keep the *key* of the closet?

Major Cyp. Colonel, I beg—this is not a time—

Enter BLOOM.

Bloom. (*To the Major.*) The horns are ready, sir—wou'd you choose to have them?

Major Cyp. No. (*In a fury.*) [*Exit* BLOOM.

Enter LADY EUSTON, *and* LADY HARRIET, *at opposite doors.*

La. Eus. Where is Sir George?

Mr Eus. Here, my dear—just stept out of the closet.

La. Eus. What closet?

Col. Down. *That*—that very *identical* closet.

Major Cyp. Heigh ho!

Mr Eus. Indeed, Lady Euston, you have cause to reproach him.

La. Eus. I fear he will rather reproach me for this abrupt intrusion—but my apprehensions for his safety (hearing no tidings from his uncles) have alone impell'd me to it.

La. Har. Had your ladyship not written this letter to the amiable Sir Harry Harmless, (which I unfortunately supposed intended for Major Cyprus,) your ladyship's alarming "apprehensions" might have been spared, as I sent for Sir George but to shew him this letter.

Mr Eus. And that letter was only a joke—a scheme to mortify the Major and Sir Harry.

La. Eus. It was so—I own it. And the confusion the scheme has occasioned, Sir George, needs all your forgiveness.

Sir Geo. I sincerely pardon it—and hope the whole company will do me the justice to believe that my sole motive, for entering this house, was a compliance with, what I then thought, the dying request of that lady. And I now believe, that her ladyship's sole motive for wishing to see me was merely to shew me the letter of which she speaks—a copy of which, not without my knowledge, but against my opinion, was written by Lady Euston to Major Cyprus, appointing a fictitious interview, in return for his having dared to offend her with the profession of a licentious passion!

Major Cyp. Sir George, I am perfectly satisfied with this explanation. But, after what has happened, the world may despise me for being so, and therefore, Lady Harriet, from this moment we separate—And we had been wiser, as well as happier, if we had never met.

La. Har. Most willingly separate—Your unkind treatment—and my own constant inquietude—have long since taught a woman of the world too feelingly to acknowledge, "No lasting friendship is form'd on "vice."

Mr Ant. Preach this, my dear lady, to all your fair countrywomen—enforce your words by your future conduct, and they shall draw a veil over the frailty of your past life.

La. Har. Oh! Mr Anthony, cou'd I but retrieve my innocence, my honour, for ever lost!

Mr Ant. Yet, do not despair. You can still possess *one* inestimable good—that inborn virtue which *never perishes*—which never leaves us but to return;

For, when you think it extinguished, feel but due remorse, and it rises again in the soul.

Mr Eus. That's right, brother Anthony—comfort her—it is your duty. And we are all *relations,* you know—the whole company are related to one another. Though it is in an odd kind of a jumbled way—I wish some learned gentleman, of the law, would tell us *what* relations we all are—and what relation the child of a first husband is to his mother's second husband, while his own father is living.

Mr Ant. Brother, you think too deeply.

Mr Eus. Not at all, brother Anthony! And, for fear the gentlemen of the long robe shou'd not be able to find out the present company's *affinity,* let us apply to the *kindred ties* of each other's passions, weaknesses, and imperfections; and, thereupon, agree to part, this evening, not only *near relations,* but *good friends.*

NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOURS;

A

COMEDY,

IN THREE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, HAYMARKET.

BY

MRS. INCHBALD.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir George Splendorville,	*Mr Palmer.*
Mr Manly,	*Mr Kemble.*
Mr Blackman,	*Mr Baddeley.*
Mr Lucre,	*Mr R. Palmer.*
Lord Hazard,	*Mr Evatt.*
Willford,	*Mr Aickin.*
Henry,	*Mr Palmer, jun.*
Bluntly,	*Mr Bannister, jun.*
Lady Caroline Seymour,	*Mrs Brooks.*
Lady Bridget Squander,	*Miss Heard.*
Evans,	*Mrs Edwards.*
Eleanor,	*Mrs Kemble.*

Other Ladies, Gentlemen, Servants, &c.

SCENE,—London.

NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOURS.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

An Antichamber at SIR GEORGE SPLENDORVILLE'S, *adjoining a Ball-room.*

Enter BLUNTLY, *meeting a Servant in Livery.*

Blun. Come, come, is not every thing ready? Is not the ball-room prepared yet? It is past ten o'clock.

Ser. We have only to fix up the new chandelier.

Blun. I'll have no new chandelier.

Ser. My master said the last ball he gave, the company were in the dark.

Blun. And if you blind them with too much light, they will be in the dark still.

Ser. The musicians, sir, wish for some wine.

Blun. What, before the ball begins? No, tell them if they are tipsy at the end of it, it will be quite soon enough.

Ser. You are always so cross, Mr Bluntly, when my master is going to have company.

Blun. Have not I a right to be cross? For while the whole house is in good humour, if there was not one person cross enough to take a little care, every thing would be wasted and ruined through extreme good temper. (*A man crosses the stage.*) Here, you—Mister—Pray, are you the person who was sent with the chandelier?

Shop. Yes, sir.

Blun. Then please to take it back again—We don't want it.

Shop. What is your objection to it, sir?

Blun. It will cost too much.

Shop. Mr Bluntly, all the trades-people are more frightened at you than at your master. Sir George, Heaven bless him! never cares how much a thing costs.

Blun. That is, because he never cares whether he pays for it or not; but if he did, depend upon it he would be very particular. Tradesmen all wish to be paid for their ware, don't they?

Shop. Certainly, sir.

Blun. Then why will they force so many unnecessary things, and make so many extravagant charges, as to put all power of payment out of the question?

Enter EVANS.—*The Tradesman goes off at the opposite Door.*

Blun. How do you do, Mrs Evans?—(*Sullenly.*)

Ev. What makes you sigh, Mr Bluntly?

Blun. What makes you smile?

Ev. To see all the grand preparations for the ball this evening. I anticipate the joy my lady will take here, and I smile for *her*.

Blun. And I sigh for my master. I foresee all the bills that will be brought in, for this evening's expence, and I anticipate the sorrow it will one day be to *him*.

Ev. But consider, Mr Bluntly, your master has my lady's fortune to take.

Blun. Yes, but I consider, he has your lady to take along with it; and I prophecy one will stick by him some time after the other is gone.

Ev. For shame. My lady, I have no doubt, will soon cure Sir George of his extravagance.

Blun. It will then be by taking away the means. Why, Lady Caroline is as extravagant as himself.

Ev. You are mistaken. She never gives routs, masquerades, balls, or entertainments of any kind.

Blun. But she constantly goes to them whenever she is invited.

Ev. That, I call but a slight imprudence. She has no wasteful indiscretion like Sir George. For instance, she never makes a lavish present.

Blun. No, but she *takes* a lavish present, as readily as if she did.

Ev. And surely you cannot call that imprudence?

Blun. No, I call it something worse.

Ev. Then, although she loves gaming to distraction, and plays deep, yet she never loses.

Blun. No, but she always wins—and *that* I call something worse.

(*A loud rapping at the street-door.*)

Ev. Here's the company. Will you permit me, Mr Bluntly, to stand in one corner, and have a peep at them ?

Blun. If you please. (*Rapping again.*) What spirit there is in that, Rat, tat, tat, tat. And what life, frolic, and joy, the whole house is going to experience, except myself. As for me, I am ready to cry at the thoughts of it all. [*Exit.*

Enter LADY CAROLINE.

L. Car. Here, the first of the company. I am sorry for it. (*Evans comes forward.*) Evans, what has brought you hither ?

Ev. I came, my lady, to see the preparations making on *your* account—for it is upon your account alone, that Sir George gives this grand *fête.*

L. Car. Why, I do flatter myself it is. But where is he ? What is it o'clock ?—It was impossible to stay at the stupid opera.—How do I look ? I once did intend to wear those set of diamonds Sir George presented me with the other morning—but then, I reflected again, that if——

Ev. Ah, my lady, what a charming thing to have such a lover ; Sir George prevents every wish ; he must make the best of husbands.

L. Car. And yet my father wishes to break off the marriage ; he talks of his prodigality ; and, certainly, Sir George lives above his income.

Ev. But then, madam, so does every body else.

L. Car. But Sir George ought undoubtedly to change his conduct, and not be thus continually giving balls and entertainments ; and inviting to his table acquaintance, that not only come to devour his dinners and suppers, but him.

Ev. And there are people malicious enough to call your ladyship one of his devourers too.

L. Car. As a treaty of marriage is so nearly concluded between us, I think, Mrs Evans, I am at liberty to visit Sir George, or to receive his presents, without having my character, or my delicacy called in question. (*A loud rapping.*) The company are coming: is it not strange he is not here to receive them. [*Exit* EVANS.

Enter two ladies and a gentleman, who curts y ad bow to LADY CAROLINE.—SIR GEORGE *enters at the opposite door, magnificently dressed.*

Sir Geo. Ladies, I entreat your pardon; dear Lady Caroline excuse me. I have been in the country all the morning, and have had scarce time to return to town and dress for your reception. (*Another rapping.*)

Enter MR LUCRE, LORD HAZARD, LADY BRIDGET SQUANDER, &c.

Sir Geo. Dear Lucre, I am glad to see you.

Mr Lu. My dear Sir George, I had above ten engagements this evening, but they all gave place to your invitation.

Sir Geo. Thank you.—My dear Lady Bridget—

L. Brid. It is impossible to resist an invitation from the most polished man alive. (*Sir George bows.*) What a superb dress! (*in his hearing, as he turns away,*) and what an elegant deportment!

Mr Lu. (*After speaking apart with Sir George.*) No, I am not in a state to take any part at Pharo—I am ruin'd. Would you believe it, Sir George, I am not worth a farthing in the world.

Sir Geo. Yes, I believed it long ago.

Mr Lu. Now we are on that subject; could you lend me a hundred pounds?

Sir Geo. (*Taking out his pocket-book.*) I have about me only this bill for two hundred.

Mr Lu. That will do as well; I am not circumstantial. (*Takes it.*) And my dear Sir George, command my purse at any time—all it contains, will ever be at your service.

Sir Geo. I thank you.

Mr Lu. Nay, though I have no money of my own, yet you know I can always raise friends; and by heaven! my dear Sir George, I often wish to see you reduced to my circumstances, merely to prove how much I could, and *would*, do to serve you.

Sir Geo. I sincerely thank you.

Mr Luc. And one can better ask a favour for one's friend than for one's-self, you know: for when one wants to borrow money on one's own account, there are so many little delicacies to get the better of; such as I felt just now. I was as pale as death, I dare say, when I asked you for this money; did not you perceive I was?

Sir Geo. I can't say I did.

Mr Lu. But you must have observed I hesitated, and looked very foolish.

Sir Geo. I thought for my part, that I looked as foolish. But I hope I did not hesitate.

Mr Lu. Nor ever will, when a friend applies to you, I'll answer for it—Nor ever shall a friend hesitate when you apply.

L. Haz. (*Taking Sir George aside.*) The obligations I am under to you for extricating me from that dangerous business—

Sir Geo. Never name it.

L. Haz. Not only name it, Sir George, but shortly I hope to return the kindness; and, if I do but live——

Sir Geo. (*To the company.*) Permit me to conduct you to the next apartment.

L. Car. Most willingly, Sir George. I was the first who arrived; which proves my eagerness to dance.

Sir Geo. (*Aside to her.*) But let me hope, passion for dancing was not the only one, that caused your impatience.

(*As the company move towards the ball-room,* MR LUCRE *and* LORD HAZARD *come forward.*

Mr Lu. Oh! there never was such a man in the world as the master of this house; there never was such a friendly, generous, noble heart; he has the best heart in the world, and the best taste in dress.

[*The company Exeunt, and the music is heard to begin.*

SCENE II.

An apartment, which denotes the Poverty of the Inhabitants. HENRY *and* ELEANOR *discovered.*

Elea. It is very late and very cold too, brother; and yet we have neither of us heart to bid each other good night.

Hen. No—beds were made for rest.

Elea. And that noise of carriages and link-boys at Sir George Splendorville's, next door, would keep us awake, if our sorrows did not.

Hen. The poor have still more to complain of, when chance throws them thus near the rich,—it forces upon their minds a comparison might drive them to despair, if—

Elea. If they should not have good sense enough to reflect, that all this bustle and show of pleasure, may fall very short of happiness; as all the distress *we* feel, has not yet, thank Heaven, reached to misery.

Hen. What do you call it then?

Elea. A trial; sent to make us patient.

Hen. It may make you so, but cannot me. Good morning to you. (*Going.*)

Elea. Nay, it is night yet. Where are you going?

Hen. I don't know.—To take a walk. The streets are not more uncomfortable than this place, and scarcely colder.

Elea. Oh, my dear brother! I cannot express half the uneasiness I feel when you part from me, though but for the shortest space.

Hen. Why?

Elea. Because I know your temper; you are impatient under adversity; you rashly think Providence is unkind; and you would snatch those favours, which are only valuable when bestowed.

Hen. What do you mean?

Elea. Nay, do not be angry; but every time you go out into this tempting town, where superfluous riches continually meet the eye of the poor, I tremble lest you should forfeit your honesty for that, which Heaven decreed should not belong to you.

Hen. And if I did, you would despise and desert me?

Elea. No: not desert you; for I am convinced you would only take to bring to me; but this is to assure you, I do not want for any thing.

Hen. Not want?—Nor does my father?

Elea. Scarcely while we visit him. Every time he sees us we make him happy; but he would never behold us again if we behaved unworthy of him.

Hen. What! banish us from a prison?

Elea. And although it is a prison, you could not be happy under such a restriction.

Hen. Happy! When was I happy last?

Elea. Yesterday, when your father thanked you for your kindness to him. Did we not all three weep with affection for each other? and was not that happiness?

Hen. It was—nor will I give up such satisfaction, for any enticement that can offer. Be contented, Eleanor,—for your sake and my father's, I will be honest. Nay, more; I will be scrupulously proud; and that line of conduct which my own honour could not force me to follow, my love to *you* and *him*, shall compel me to. When, through necessity, I am tempted to plunder, your blushes and my father's anguish shall hold my hand. And when I am urged through impatience, to take away my own life, your lingering death and his, shall check the horrid suggestion, and I will live for you.

Elea. Then do not ever trust yourself away, at least from one of us.

Hen. Dear sister! do you imagine that your power is less when separated from me? Do you suppose I think less frequently on my father and his dismal prison, because we are not always together? Oh, no! he comes even more forcibly to my thoughts in his absence; and then, more bitterly do I feel his misery, than while the patient old man, before my eyes, talks to me of his consolations; his internal comforts from a conscience pure, a mind without malice, and a heart, where every virtue occupy a place. Therefore, do not fear that I shall forget either him or you, though I might possibly forget myself. [*Exit.*

Elea. If before him I am cheerful, yet to myself I must complain. (*Weeps.*) And that sound of festivity

at the house adjoining is insupportable! especially when I reflect that a very small portion of what will be wasted there only this one night, would be sufficient to give my dear father liberty.

(*A rapping at the door of her chamber, on the opposite entrance.*)

Elea. Who's there?

Mr Blac. Open the door. (*Without.*)

Elea. The voice of our landlord. (*Goes to the door.*) Is it you, Mr Blackman?

Blac. Yes, open the door. (*Rapping louder.*)

(*She opens it.*—BLACKMAN *enters, followed by* BLUNTLY.)

Blac. What a time have you made me wait! And in the name of wonder, why do you lock your door? Have you any thing to lose? Have not you already sold all the furniture you brought hither? And are you afraid of being stolen yourself?

(ELEANOR *retires to the back of the Stage.*)

Blun. Is this the chamber?

Blac. Yes, sir, yes, Mr Bluntly, this is it.

(BLACKMAN *assumes a very different tone of voice in speaking to* BLUNTLY *and* ELEANOR; *to the one, he is all submissive humility, to the other, all harshness.*)

Blun. This! (*Contemptuously.*)

Blac. Why yes, sir; this is the only place I have left in my own house, since your master has been pleased to occupy that next door, while his own magnificent one has been repairing. Lock yourself up, indeed! (*Looking at Eleanor.*) You have been continually asking me for more rooms, Mr Bluntly, and have not I made near half a dozen doors already from one house to the other, on purpose to accommodate

your good family. Upon my honour, I have not now a single chamber but what I have let to these lodgers, and what I have absolute occasion for myself.

Blun. And if you do put yourself to a little inconvenience, Mr Blackman, surely my master—

Blac. Your master, Mr Bluntly, is a very good man; a very generous man; and I hope at least he has found me a very lucky one; for good luck is all the recommendation which I, in my humble station, aspire to; and since I have been Sir George's attorney, I have gained him no less than two law-suits.

Blun. I know it. I know also that you have lost him four.

Blac. We'll drop the subject. And in regard to this room, sir, it does not suit, you say?

Blun. No, for I feel the cold wind blow through every crevice.

Blac. But suppose I was to have it put a little into repair? That window, for instance, shall have a pane or two of glass put in; the cracks of the door shall be stopt up; and then every thing will have a very different appearance.

Blun. And why has not this been done before?

Blac. Would you have me be laying out my money, while I only let the place at a paltry price, to people who I am obliged to threaten to turn into the streets every quarter, before I can get my rent from them?

Blun. Is that the situation of your lodgers at present?

Blac. Yes.—But they made a better appearance when they first came, or I had not taken such persons to live thus near to your master.

Blun. That girl (*looking at Eleanor,*) seems very pretty; and I dare say my master would not care if he was nearer to her.

Blac. Pshaw, pshaw; she is a poor creature; she is in great distress. She is misery itself.

Blun. I feel quite charmed with misery. Who belongs to her?

Blac. A young man who says he is her brother: very likely he is not; but that I should not enquire about, if they could pay my rent. If people will pay me, I don't care what they are. (*Addressing himself to Eleanor.*) I desire you will tell your brother when he comes in, that I have occasion for the money which will be due to me to-morrow; and if I don't receive it before to-morrow night, he must seek some other habitation.

Blun. Hush, Mr Blackman; if you speak so loud, you will have our company in the next house hear you.

Blac. And if they did, do you think it would spoil their dancing? No, Mr Bluntly. And in that respect, I am a person of fashion: I never suffer any distress to interfere with my enjoyments.

Elea. (*Coming to him.*) Dear sir, have but patience a little while longer. Indeed, I hope you will lose nothing.

Blac. I *won't* lose any thing. (*Going.*)

Elea. (*Following him.*) Sir, I would speak a single word to you, if you will be so good as to hear me?

Blun. Ay, stay and hear her.

Elea. (*Looking at Bluntly.*) But I wish to speak to him by ourselves.

Blun. Then I'll withdraw.

Blac. What have you to say? (*In anger.*)

Blun. Hear her, Mr Blackman; or may none of her sex ever listen to you. [*Exit.*

Blac. If it is only to entreat me to let you continue here, I am going in an instant. Come, speak quickly, for I have no time to lose. Come, speak, speak

Elea. But are you resolved to have no pity? You know in what a helpless situation we are; and the deplorable state of my poor father. (*Weeping.*)

Blac. Ay, I thought what you had to say; farewell, farewell.

Elea. (*Laying hold of him.*) Oh! do not plunge us into more distress than what we can bear; but open your heart to compassion.

Blac. I can't—'tis a thing I never did in my life.

(*Going, he meets Bluntly, who stops him.*)

Blun. Well, have you granted her request?

Blac. I would do a great deal to oblige you, Mr Bluntly; and if you will only give your word for the trifle of rent owing, why, I am not so hard-hearted but I will suffer her to stay.

Blun. Well, well; I will give my word.

Blac. But remember, it is not to be put down to your master's account, but to your own. I am not to give credit.

Elea. Nor am I to lay my brother under an obligation of this nature. (*To Bluntly.*) I thank you for your offer, sir, but I cannot accept it.

Blac. (*In extreme anger.*) What do you mean by that?

Blun. Perhaps she is right.

Elea. My brother would resent my acceptance of a favour from a stranger.

Blac. Your brother resent! A poor man resent! Did you ever hear of any body's regarding a poor man's resentment?

Elea. No; nor a poor woman's prayers.

Blac. Yes, I will regard your prayers, if you will suffer this gentleman to be your friend.

Elea. Any acquaintance of your's, Mr Blackman, I must distrust.

Blac. Do you hear with what contempt she treats us both?

Blun. But perhaps she is right; at least, in treating one of us so, I am sure she is; and I will forgive her wronging the one, for the sake of her doing justice to the other.

Enter HENRY: *he starts at seeing* BLACKMAN *and* BLUNTLY.

Hen. Who are these?

Blac. "Who are these?" Did you ever hear such impertinence? (*Going up to him.*) Pray who are you, sir?

Hen. I am a man.

Blac. Yes; but I am a lawyer.

Hen. Whatever you are, this apartment is mine, not your's—and I desire you to leave it.

Blac. But to-morrow it will be mine, and then I shall desire *you* to leave it, and force you to leave it.

Hen. Eleanor, retire to the other chamber; I am sorry I left you. (*Leads her off.*)

Blac. And I am sorry that I and my friend should come here to be affronted.

Blun. Mr Blackman, I won't be called names.

Blac. Names, sir! What names did I call you?

Blun. Did not you call me your friend? I assure you, sir, I am not used to be called names. I am but a servant, whose character is every thing; and I'll let you know that I am *not* your friend.

Blac. Why, you blockhead, does not your master call himself my friend?

Blun. Yes, my master is a great man, and he can get a place without a character,—but if I lose mine, I am ruined; therefore, take care how you miscal me for the future, for I assure you I won't bear it, I am not your friend, and you shall find I am not.

[*Exit* (*in great anger,*) BLACKMAN *following.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at SIR GEORGE SPLENDORVILLE'S.

Enter SIR GEORGE, *followed by* BLUNTLY.

Sir Geo. What's o'clock? (*Rubbing his eyes.*)

Blun. Just noon, sir.

Sir Geo. Why was I waked so early?

Blun. You were not waked, sir—You rung.

Sir Geo. Then it was in my sleep—and could not you suppose so? After going to bed at five, to make me rise at noon! (*in a violent passion.*) What am I to do with myself, sir, till it is time to go out for the evening?

Blun. You have company to dinner you know, sir.—

Sir Geo. No, it is to supper—and what am I to do with myself till that time?

Blun. Company again to supper, sir?

Sir Geo. Yes, and the self-same company I had last night; I invited them upon lady Caroline's account: to give her an opportunity of revenge, for

the money she lost here yesterday evening; and I am all weariness; I am all lassitude and fretfulness till the time arrives. But now I call to mind, I have an affair that may engage my attention a few hours. You were giving me an account, Bluntly, of that beautiful girl I saw enter at Blackman's?

Blun. Yes, sir, I saw her late last night in Mr Blackman's house; she lodges there.

Sir Geo. Indeed! In Blackman's house? I am glad to hear it.

Blun. And he has assured me, sir, that she and her family are in the greatest poverty imaginable.

Sir Geo. I am glad to hear it.

Blun. They have been it seems above a twelvemonth in London, in search of some rich relations; but instead of meeting with them, the father was seen and remembered by an old creditor, who has thrown him into prison.

Sir Geo. I am very glad to hear it.

Blun. But the young woman, sir, has been so short a time in town, she has, seemingly, a great deal of modesty and virtue.

Sir Geo. And I am very glad to hear of that too—I like her the better—you know I do—for I am weary of that ready compliance I meet with from the sex.

Blun. But if I might presume to advise, sir—as you are so soon to be married to her ladyship, whom you love with sincere affection, you should give up this pursuit.

Sir Geo. And I *shall* give it up, Bluntly, before my marriage takes place; for, short as that time may be, I expect this passion will be over and forgotten, long before the interval has passed away. But that brother you were mentioning——

Blun. I have some reason to think, that with all his poverty, he has a notion of honour.

Sir Geo. (*Laughing.*) Oh! I have often tried the effect of a purse of gold with people of honour. Have you desired them to be sent for as I ordered?

Blun. I have, sir.

Sir Geo. See if they are come. (*Exit* BLUNTLY.) Ah! my dear Lady Caroline, it is you, and only you, whom I love with a sincere passion! but in waiting this long expected event of our marriage, permit me to indulge some less exalted wishes.

Enter BLUNTLY.

Sir Geo. Are they come?

Blun. The young man is in the anti-chamber, sir, but his sister is not with him. (*Speaking to Henry who is without.*) Please to walk this way—my master desires to see you.

Sir Geo. No, no, no—I do not desire to see him, if his sister is not there. Zounds, you scoundrel, what do you call him in for?

Enter HENRY, *and bows.*

(SIR GEORGE *looks at him with a careless familiarity*—BLUNTLY *leaves the room.*)

Sir Geo. Young man, I am told you are very poor: you may have heard that I am very rich; and I suppose you are acquainted with the extensive meaning of the word—generosity.

Hen. (*After an hesitation.*) Perhps not, sir.

Sir Geo. The meaning of it, as I comprehend, is, for the rich to give to the poor. Have you any thing to ask of me in which I can serve you?

Hen. Your proposal is so general, I am at a loss what to answer; but you are, no doubt, acquainted with the extensive meaning of the word, *pride*,—and that will apologize for the seeming indifference with which I receive your offer.

Sir Geo. Your pride seems extensive indeed. I heard your father was in prison, and I pitied him.

Hen. Did you, sir? Did you pity my father:—I beg your pardon—if I have said any thing to offend you, pray forgive it; nor let my rudeness turn your compassion away from him, to any other object.

Sir Geo. Would a small sum release him from confinement? Would about a hundred pounds——

Hen. I have no doubt but it would.

Sir Geo. Then take that note.—Be not surprised; I mean to dispose of a thousand guineas this way, instead of fitting up a theatre in my own house. That (*giving him the note,*) is a mere trifle; my box at the opera, or my dinner; I mean to dine alone to-morrow, instead of inviting company.

Hen. Sir George, I spoke so rudely to you at first, that I know no other way to shew my humility, than to accept your present without reluctance—I do therefore, as the gift of benevolence, not as the insult of better fortune.

Sir Geo. You have a brother, have not you?

Hen. No, sir—and only one sister.

Sir Geo. A sister is it? well, let me see your father and your brother—sister I mean—did not you say? you said a sister, did not you?

Hen. Yes, sir.

Sir Geo. Well, let me see your father and her; they will rejoice at their good fortune—I imagine, and I wish to be a witness of their joy.

Hen. I will this moment go to our lawyer, extricate my father, and we will all return and make you the spectator of the happiness you have bestowed. Forgive my eagerness to disclose your bounty, sir, if, before I have said half I feel, I fly to reveal it to my father; to whom I can more powerfully express my sensations—than in your presence. [*Exit.*

Sir Geo. That bait has taken—and now, if the sister will only be as grateful.

Enter BLUNTLY.

Blun. Dear sir, what can you have said to the young man? I never saw a person so much affected!

Sir Geo. In what manner?

Blun. The tears ran down his cheeks as he passed along, and he held something in his hand which he pressed to his lips, and then to his heart, as if it was a treasure.

Sir Geo. It *is* a treasure, Bluntly—a hundred guineas.

Blun. But for which, I believe, you expect a greater treasure in return.

Sir Geo. Dost think so, Bluntly?—dost think the girl is worth a hundred pounds?

Blun. If she refuses, she is worth a thousand; but if she complies, you have thrown away your money.

Sir Geo. Just the reverse.

Blun. But I hope, sir, you do not mean to throw away any more thus; for although this sum, by way of charity, may be well applied, yet indeed, sir, I know some of your creditors as much in want as this poor family.

Sir Geo. How! You are in pay by some of my creditors, I suppose?

Blun. No, sir, you must pay them, before they can pay any body.

Sir Geo. You are impertinent; leave the room instantly, and go in search of this sister; now, while the son is gone to release his father. Tell her, her brother is here, and bring her hither immediately.

Blun. But, sir, if you will only give me leave to speak one word—

Sir Geo. Do, speak; (*Goes to the chimney-piece and takes down a pistol.*) Only speak a single syllable, and I'll send a ball instantly through your head.

Blun. I am dumb, sir; I don't speak indeed, sir; upon my life I don't. I wish I may die if I speak a word.

Sir Geo. Go on the errand I told you; and, if you dare to return without the girl, this is your fate.

(*Holding up the pistol.*)

Blun. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

Sir Geo. (*Laying the pistol on the table.*) Impertinent puppy; to ruffle the temper of a man of fashion with hints of prudence and morality, and paying his debts! all this from a servant, too. The insolent, chattering——

Enter BLUNTLY.

Blun. May I speak now, sir?

Sir Geo. What have you to say?

Blun. Mr Blackman, sir.

Sir Geo. Bid him come in.

Enter BLACKMAN. *Exit* BLUNTLY.

Sir Geo. Good morning, Mr Blackman; come, sit down.

Blac. (*Bowing respectfully.*) I am glad, Sir George, I have found you alone, for I come to speak to you on important business.

Sir Geo. Business?—no; not now if you please.

Blac. But I must, sir; I have been here ten times before, and have been put off; but now you must hear what I have to say.

Sir Geo. Don't be long then—don't be tedious, Mr Blackman; for I expect a—a—in short, I expect a pretty woman.

Blac. When she comes, I will go.

Sir Geo. Very well, speak quickly then. What have you to say?

Blac. I come to speak upon the subject of your father's will; by which you know, you run the hazard of losing great part of what he left behind.

Sir Geo. But what am I to do?

Blac. There is no time to be lost. Consider, that Mr Manly, the lawyer, whom your father employed, is a man who pretends to a great deal of morality; and it was he who, when your father found himself dying, alarmed his conscience, and persuaded him to make this will in favour of a second person. Now, I think that you and I, both together, ought to have a meeting with this conscientious lawyer.

Sir Geo. But I should imagine, Mr Blackman, that if he is really a conscientious man, you and he will not be upon good terms.

Blac. Oh! people of our avocation differ in respect to conscience. Puzzle, confound, and abuse each other, and yet are upon good terms.

Sir Geo. But I fear——

Blac. Fear nothing. There are a vast number of resources in our art. It is so spacious, and yet so confined; so sublime, and yet so profound; so distinct, and yet so complicated; that if ever this person with whom your fortune is divided should be found, I know how to envelope her in a labyrinth, where she shall be lost again in a hurry. But your father's lawyer being a very honest—I mean a very particular man in his profession,—I have reason to fear we cannot gain him over to our purpose.—If, therefore,—

Enter BLUNTLY.

Sir Geo. My visitor is come, as I told you.

Blac. And I am gone, as I told you.

(*Rising.—Going.*)

Enter ELEANOR.

Blac. (*Aside.*) My lodger! ah! ah! (*To her in a whisper.*) You may stay another quarter. [*Exit.*

Sir Geo. (*To Eleanor.*) I am glad to see you.—Bluntly—(*Makes a sign to him to leave the room.*)

Blun. Sir?

(SIR GEORGE *waves his hand and nods his head a second time.*)

Blun. Sir?——(*Still affecting not to understand him.*)

Sir Geo. I bid you go. (*Angrily.*)

Blun. You bid me go, sir?—Oh yes, sir. Very well, sir. But indeed, sir, I did not hear you before, sir. Indeed I did not.

[*Bows and exit with reluctance, which Eleanor observes.*

Elea. Pardon me, sir; I understood my brother was here, but I find he is not.

Sir Geo. He is but this instant gone, and will return immediately. Stay then with me till he comes. (*Takes her hand.*) Surely you cannot refuse to remain with me a few moments; especially as I have a great deal to say to you that may tend to your advantage.

Why do you cast your eyes with such impatience on that door? (*Goes and locks it.*) There, now you may look at it in vain.

Elea. For heaven's sake, why am I locked in?

Sir Geo. Because, you should not escape.

Elea. That makes me resolve I will—Open the door, sir. (*Going to it.*)

Sir Geo. Nay, listen to me. Your sentiments, I make no doubt, are formed from books.

Elea. No, from misfortunes,—yet more instructive.

Sir Geo. You shall never know misfortune more;

you, nor your relations. But this moment I presented your brother with a sum of money, and he left me with professions of the deepest gratitude.

Elea. My brother! Has he received money from you? Ah! he promised me he'd not disgrace his family.

Sir Geo. How! Family, indeed!

Elea. I cannot remain here a moment longer.—Open the door, sir—open it immediately.

(*Raising her voice.*)

Blun. (*Without.*) Sir, sir, sir; open the door, if you please; you are wanted, sir.

Sir Geo. S'death! who can want me in such haste? (*Opens the door, and appears confounded.*)

Enter BLUNTLY.

Sir Geo. Well, sir!

Blun. ——Did you call, sir?

Sir Geo. It was *you* who called, sir.

Blun. Who, I, sir?

Sir Geo. Yes, sir, you—Who wants me?

Blun. (*Looking at Eleanor.*) Perhaps it was *you* that called, ma'am?

Elea. It *was* I that called: and pray be so kind as to conduct me to my own lodgings.

(BLUNTLY *offers her his hand.*)

Sir Geo. Dare not to touch her; or to stay another moment in the room. Begone.

BLUNTLY *looks at* ELEANOR *aside, and points to the pistol; then bows humbly, and retires.*

Sir Geo. And now, my fair Lucretia—

He is going to seize her—she takes up the pistol and presents it.

Elea. No, it's not *myself* I'll kill—'Tis you.

Sir Geo. (*Starting.*) Nay, nay, nay, lay it down. Lay that foolish thing down; I beg you will. (*Trembling.*) It is charged; it may go off.

Elea. I mean it to go off.

Sir Geo. But no jesting—I never liked jesting in my life.

Elea. Nor I—but am always serious. Dare not, therefore, insult me again, but let me go to my wretched apartments.

(*Passes by him, presenting the pistol.*)

Sir Geo. Go to the——

She turns short at the door, and presents it again.

Sir Geo. What would you do? Here Bluntly! Bluntly!

[*Exit* ELEANOR.

Enter BLUNTLY.

Blun. Did you call or no, sir?

Sir Geo. Yes, sir, I did call now. (*In a threatening accent.*) Don't you think you have behaved very well this morning?

Blun. Yes, sir, I think I have.

Sir Geo. I am not joking.

Blun. Nor am I, sir.

Sir Geo. And do not you think I should behave very well, if I was to discharge you my service?

Blun. As well as can be expected, sir.

Sir Geo. Why did you break in upon me just now? Did you think I was going to murder the girl?

Blun. No, sir, I suspected neither love nor murder.

Sir Geo. What then did you suspect?

Blun. Why, sir, if I may make bold to speak, I was afraid the poor girl might be robbed: and of all she is worth in the world.

Sir Geo. Blockhead! I suppose you mean her virtue? (*Smiling with contempt.*)

Blun. Why, to say the truth, sir, virtue is a currency that grows scarce in the world now-a-days—and some men are so much in need of it, that they think nothing of stopping a harmless female passenger in her road through life, and plundering her of it without remorse, though its loss embitters every hour she must afterwards pass in her journey.

Enter HENRY.

Hen. Sir George, my father, liberated from prison by your bounty, is come gratefully to offer——

Enter WILLFORD *and* ELEANOR.

Elea. (*Holding her father by the hand, to prevent his going forward.*) Oh, my father! whither are you going? Turn back—turn back.

Hen. (*To his father.*) This is your benefactor; the man whose benevolence has put an end to your sufferings.

(ELEANOR *bursts into tears and retires up the stage.*)

Wil. How, sir, can I ever repay what I owe to you?—or how describe those emotions, which your goodness at this moment makes me feel?

Sir Geo. (*In confusion.*) Very well—very well—'tis all very well. (*Aside.*) I wish it was.—(*To him.*) I am glad I have been of service to you.

Wil. You have been like mercy to us all. My daughter's gratitude overflows in tears. But why, my child, do you keep apart from us? Can you be too timid to confess your obligation?

Sir Geo. Let her alone; let her indulge her humour.

Wil. Speak, Eleanor.

Sir Geo. No, I had rather she would be silent.

Wil. You offend me by this obstinacy.

Elea. (*Going to Willford and taking his hand.*) Oh, my father!—Oh! I cannot——I cannot speak.

Wil. Wherefore? Explain this moment, what agitates you thus.

Elea. You must return to confinement again.

Wil. How?

Elea. The money that has set you free, was given for the basest of purposes; and by a man as far beneath you in principle, as you are beneath him in fortune. Disdain the obligation; and come, my father, return to prison.

Wil. Yes.—And with more joy than I left it. (*To Sir George.*) Joy, in my daughter's virtuous contempt of thee. (*To his children.*) Leave the house instantly. [*Exit* HENRY *and* ELEANOR.

Wil. (*Addressing himself to Sir George.*) Your present is but deposited in a lawyer's hands, whose word gained me my liberty; he shall immediately return it to you, while I return to imprisonment.

Sir Geo. If the money is in a lawyer's hands, my good friend, it may be some time before you get it returned. (*Going.*)

Wil. Stay, Sir George—(*he returns.*) And look me in the face while you insult me. (*Sir George looks on the floor.*) You cannot. I therefore triumph, while you stand before me abashed like a culprit. Yet, be assured, unthinking dissipated man, that with all your insolence and cruelty towards me and mine, I have still the charity to rejoice, even for your sake, at seeing you thus confounded. This shame is at least one trait in your favour; and while it revenges my wrongs, gives me joy to find, you are not a *hardened* libertine. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

The apartment at SIR GEORGE SPLENDORVILLE'S, *where the night has been passed at play—Several card-tables with company playing—*SIR GEORGE *and* LADY CAROLINE *at the same table.* SIR GEORGE *rises furiously.*

Sir Geo. Never was the whole train of misfortunes so united to undo a man, as this night to ruin me. The most obstinate round of ill luck——

Mr Luc. (*Waking from a sleep.*) What is all that? You have lost a great deal of money, I suppose?

Sir Geo. Every guinea I had about me, and fifteen thousand besides, for which I have given my word.

Mr Luc. Fifteen thousand guineas! and I have not won one of them. Oh, confusion upon every thing that has prevented me.

Sir Geo. (*Taking Lady Caroline aside.*) Lady Caroline, you are the sole person who has profited by my loss. Prove to me that your design was not to ruin me; to sink me into the abyss of misfortune; prove to me, you love me in return for all my

tender love to you. And (*taking up the cards*) give me my revenge in one single cut.

L. Car. If this is the proof you require, I consent.

Sir Geo. Thank you. And it is for double or quit. Thank you. (*She shuffles and cuts.*

Sir Geo. Ay, it will be mine, thank you—I shall be the winner, thank you. (*He cuts, then tears the cards, and throws them on the floor.*) Distraction !—Furies of the blackest kind conspire against me, and all their serpents are in my heart. Cruel, yet beloved woman ! Could you thus abuse and take advantage of the madness of my situation ?

L. Car. Your misfortunes, my dear Sir George—make you blind.

Sir Geo. (*Taking her again aside.*) No, they have rather opened my eyes, and have shown me what you are. Still an object I adore ; but I now perceive you are one to my ruin devoted. If any other intention had directed you, would you have thus decoyed me to my folly ? You know my proneness to play, your own likelihood of success, and have palpably allured me to my destruction. Ungrateful woman, you never loved me, but taught me to believe so, in order to partake of my prodigality.—Do not be suspicious, madam ; the debt shall be discharged within a week.

L. Car. (*with the utmost indifference.*) That will do, sir, I depend upon your word ; and that will do.

[*Exit, curtsying.*

Sir Geo. Ungrateful, cruel—she is gone without giving me one hope. She even insults, despises me.

Mr Luc. (*coming forward.*) Indeed, my dear friend, I compassionate your ill luck most feelingly ; and yet I am nearly as great an object of compassion on this occasion as yourself ; for I have not won a single guinea of all your losses : if I had,

why I could have borne your misfortune with some sort of patience.

L. Bri. My dear Sir George, your situation affects me so extremely, I cannot stay a moment longer in your presence. (*Goes to the door, and returns.*) But you may depend upon my prayers.

[*Exit.*

Lo. Haz. Sir George, if I had any consolation to offer, it should be at your service—but, you know—you are convinced—I have merely a sufficiency of consolation—that is, of friends and of money to support myself in the rank of life I hold in the world. For without that—without that rank—I sincerely wish you, good morning. [*Exit* LORD HAZARD.

Sir Geo. Good morning.

(*The company by degrees all steal out of the room, except* MR LUCRE.)

Sir Geo. (*looking around.*) Where are all my guests? the greatest part gone without a word in condolence, and the rest torturing me with insulting wishes. Here! behold! here is the sole reliance which I have prepared for the hour of misfortune; and what is it? Words, compliments, desertion, and from those, whose ingratitude makes their neglect still more poignant. (*Turns and perceives Mr Lucre.*) Lucre, my dear Lucre, are not you amazed at what you see?

Mr Luc. No, not at all—'tis the way of the world, we caress our acquaintances whilst they are happy and in power, but if they fall into misfortune, we think we do enough if we have the good nature to pity them.

Sir Geo. And are you one of these friends?

Mr Luc. I am like the rest of the world. I was in the number of your flatterers; but at present you

have none, for you may already perceive, we are grown sincere.

Sir Geo. But have not you a thousand times desired me, in any distress, to prove you?

Mr Luc. And you do prove me now, do you not? Heaven bless you. (*Shaking hands with him.*) I shall always have a regard for you, but for any thing farther—I scorn professions which I do not mean to keep. (*Going.*)

Sir Geo. Nay, but Lucre! consider the anguish in which you leave me! consider, that to be forsaken by my friends is more affecting than the loss of all my fortune. Though you have nothing else to give me, yet give me your company.

Mr Luc. My dear friend, I *cannot*. Reflect that I am under obligations to you; so many, indeed, that I am ashamed to see you. I am naturally bashful; and do not be surprised if I should never have the confidence to look you in the face again. [*Exit.*

Sir Geo. This is the world, such as I have heard it described, but not such as I could ever believe it to be. But I forgive, I forget all the world except Lady Caroline: her ingratitude fastens to my heart, and drives me to despair. She, on whom I have squandered so much; she, whom I loved, and whom I still love, spite of her perfidy!

Enter BLUNTLY.

Well, Bluntly, behold the friendship of the friends I loved! This morning I was in prosperity, and had many; this night I am ruined, and I have not one.

Blun. Ruined, sir?

Sir Geo. Totally: and shall be forced to part with every thing I possess to pay the sums I owe. Of course I shall part with all my servants, and do you endeavour to find some other place.

Blun. But first, sir, permit me to ask a favour of you?

Sir Geo. A favour of me? I have no favours now to grant.

Blun. I beg your pardon, sir, you have one, and I intreat it on my knees.

Sir Geo. What would you ask of me?

Blun. To remain along with you still. I will never quit you; but serve you for nothing, to the last moment of my life.

Sir Geo. I have then one friend left. (*Embracing him.*) And never will I forget to acknowledge the obligation.

Enter BLACKMAN.

Black. Pardon me, sir; I beg ten thousand pardons; pray excuse me, (*In the most servile manner,*) for entering before I sent to know if you were at leisure; but your attendants are all fast asleep on the chairs of your antichamber. I could not wake a soul, and I imagined you yourself were not yet up.

Sir Geo. On the contrary, I have not yet been in bed. And when I do go there, I wish never to rise from it again.

Black. Has any thing unexpected happened?

Sir Geo. Yes. That I am ruined, inevitably ruined. Behold (*Shewing the cards,*) the only wreck of my fortune.

Black. (*Starting.*) Lost all your fortune?

Sir Geo. All I am worth, and as much more as I am worth.

(BLACKMAN *draws a chair, sits down with great familiarity, and stares* SIR GEORGE *rudely in the face.*)

Black. Lost all you are worth? He, he, he, he! (*Laughs maliciously.*) Pretty news, truly! Why then I suppose I have lost great part of what I am worth? all which you are indebted to me? However,

there is a way yet to retrieve you. But—please to desire your servant to leave the room.

Sir Geo. Bluntly, leave us a moment.

(*Exit* BLUNTLY.)

Well, Mr Blackman, what is this grand secret?

Black. Why, in the state to which you have reduced yourself, there is certainly no one hope for you, but in that portion, that half of your fortune, which the will of your father keeps you out of.

Sir Geo. But how am I to obtain it? The lawyer in whose hands it is placed, will not give it up, without being insured from any future demand by some certain proofs.

Black. And suppose I should search and find proofs? Suppose I have them already by me?—But upon this occasion, you must not only rely implicitly on what I say, but it is necessary you should say the same yourself.

Sir Geo. If you advance no falsehood, I cannot have any objection.

Black. Falsehood!—Falsehood!—I apprehend, Sir George, you do not consider, that there is a particular construction put upon words and phrases in the practice of the law, which the rest of the world, out of that study, are not clearly acquainted with. For instance, *falsehood* with *us*, is not *exactly* what it is with other people.

Sir Geo. How! Is truth, immutable truth, to be corrupted and confounded by men of the law?

Black. I was not speaking of truth—that we have nothing to do with.

Sir Geo. I must not say so, however, sir; and in this crisis of my sufferings, it is the only comfort, the only consolotary reflection left me, that truth and I will never separate.

Black. Stick to your truth, but confide in me as usual. You will go with me, then, to Mr Manly

your father's lawyer, and corroborate all that I shall say.

Sir Geo. Tell me but what you intend to say?

Black. I can't do that. In the practice of the law, we never know what we intend to say—and therefore our blunders, when we make them, are in some measure excuseable—and if I should chance to make a blunder or two, I mean any trivial mistake, when we come before this lawyer, you must promise not to interfere, or in any shape contradict me.

Sir Geo. A mere lapse of memory, I have nothing to do with.

Black. And my memory grows very bad, therefore you must not disconcert me.

Sir Geo. Come, let us begone—I am ready to go with you this moment.

Black. I must first go home, and prepare a few writings.

Sir Geo. But call to mind that I rely upon your honour.

Black. Do you think Bluntly, your servant, is an honest man?

Sir Geo. I am sure he is.

Black. Then, to quiet your fears, I will take him along with us; and you will depend on what he shall say, I make no doubt?

Sir Geo. I would stake my being upon his veracity.

Black. Call him in, then, and bid him do as I command him.

Sir Geo. Here, Bluntly. (*Enter* BLUNTLY.) Mr Blackman has some business with you—listen to him with attention, and follow his directions. [*Exit.*

Black. You know, I suppose, the perilous situation of your master?

(BLUNTLY *shakes his head, and wipes his eyes.*)

Black. Good fellow! good fellow!—and you would,

I dare say, do any thing to rescue him from the misery with which he is surrounded!

Blun. I would lay down my life.

Black. You can do it for less. Only put on a black coat, and the business is done.

Blun. What, 's that all? Oh! if I can save him by putting on a black coat, I'll go buy mourning, and wear it all my life.

Black. There's a good fellow. I sincerely thank you for this attachment to your master.

(*Shaking him by the hand.*)

Blun. My dear Blackman, I beg your pardon for what I am going to say; but as you behave thus friendly on this unfortunate occasion, I must confess to you—that till now I always hated you—I could not bear the sight of you. For I thought you (I wish I may die if I did not) one of the greatest rogues in the world. I fancied you only waited on, and advised my master to make your market of him. But now, your attention to him in his distress, when all his friends have forsaken him, is so kind—Heaven bless you—Heaven bless you—I'll go buy a black coat. [*Going.*

Black. I have something more to say to you. When you have put on this coat, you must meet your master and me at Mr Manly's, the lawyer; and when we are all there, you must mind and say, exactly what I say.

Blun. And what will that be?

Black. Oh! something.

Blun. I have no objection to say something—but I hope you won't make me say any thing.

Black. You seem to doubt me once more, sir?

Blun. No, I am doubting you now for the first time; for I always thought I was *certain* before.

Black. And will you not venture to say yes, and no, to what I shall advance?

Blun. Why, I think I may venture to say yes to your no, and no to your yes, with a safe conscience.

Black. If you do not instantly follow me and do all that I shall propose, your master is ruined.—Would you see him dragged to prison?

Blun. No, I would sooner go myself.

Black. Then why do you stand talking about a safe conscience. Half my clients would have been ruined if I had shewn my zeal as you do. Conscience, indeed! Why, this is a matter of law, to serve your master in his necessity.

Blun. I have heard necessity has no law—but if it has no conscience, it is a much worse thing than I took it for. No matter for that—come along. Oh my poor master! I would even tell a *lie* to save him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Lawyer's study.

MR MANLY *discovered at his writing desk—a Servant attending.*

Man. Who do you say wants to speak with me?

Ser. Mr Lucre, sir.

Man. And who else?

Ser. A person who says his name is Willford; he looks as if he came from the country, and seems in mean circumstances.

Man. Shew him to me directly. And take Mr Lucre, or any other person of fashion that may call, to my clerks. (*Exit Servant.*) But for the poor, let them be under *my* protection.

Enter WILLFORD *and* ELEANOR.

Man. Come in—walk in, and let me know what I can do to serve you.

Will. I deposited, sir, in your clerk's hands, a sum of money to set me free from confinement for debt. On his word, I was discharged—he owns he has not yet paid away this money, still he refuses to restore it to me, though in return I again render up my person.

Man. And why would you do this?

Will. Because my honour, I mean my conscience—for that's the poor man's honour, is concerned.

Man. Explain yourself.

Will. A son of mine received this sum I speak of, and thought it *given* him; while it was only meant as a purchase—a purchase of what we had no right to sell—and therefore it must be restored to the owner.

Man. And who is he?

Will. Sir George Splendorville—I suppose you have heard of him?

Man. He, you mean, who, by the desire of his father's will, lately changed his name from Blandford?

Will. Sir!

Man. The name, which some part of the family, while reduced, had taken.

Will. Good Heaven! Is there such a circumstance in his story?

Man. Why do you ask with such emotion?

Will. Because he is the man, in search of whom I

left my habitation in the country, to present before him a destitute young woman, a near relation.

Man. What relation? Be particular in your answer.

Will. A sister.

Man. I thank you for your intelligence. You have named a person, who, for these three years past, I have in vain endeavoured to find.—But, did you say she was in poverty?

Will. I did.

Man. I give you joy, then—for I have in my possession a deed which conveys to a lost daughter of Sir George's father, the other half of the fortune he bequeathed his son—but, as yet, all my endeavours have been in vain to find where she, and an uncle, to whose care she was entrusted in her infancy, are retired.

Will. (*turning to Eleanor.*) Now, Eleanor, arm yourself with fortitude—with fortitude to bear not the frowns, but the smiles of fortune. Be humble, collected, and the same you have ever been, while I for the first time inform you—you are not my daughter.—And from this gentleman's intelligence add, you are rich—you are the deceased Blandford's child, and Splendorville's sister.

Elea. Oh! Heavens! Do I lose a father such as you, to gain a brother such as he is?

Man. (*to Willford.*) There can be no mistake on this occasion.—And you, if I am not deceived, are the brother of the late Mr Blandford. Your looks, your person, your very voice confirms it.

Will. I have writings in my care, shall prove it beyond a doubt; with the whole narrative of our separation, when he, with his son, then a youth, embarked for India; where, I suppose, riches soon succeeded poverty.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Lady Caroline Seymour, sir, is at the door in her carriage, and will not be denied admittance. She says she must see you upon some very urgent business.

Man. (*to Willford and Eleanor.*) Will you do me the favour to step for a moment into this room? Lady Caroline will not stay long. I'll not detain you.

[*Exit* WILLFORD *and* ELEANOR.

Enter LADY CAROLINE.

L. Car. Dear Mr Manly, I have a thousand apologies to make—And yet I am sure you will excuse the subject of my visit, when you consider——

Man. Your ladyship will please to sit down.

(*He draws chairs, and they sit.*)

L. Car. You cannot be ignorant, Mr Manly—you must know the terms of acquaintance on which Sir George Splendorville and I have been, for some time past? you were his father's agent; his chief solicitor; and although you are not employed by Sir George, yet the state of his affairs cannot be concealed from you. Has he, or has he not, any inheritance yet to come?

Man. Pardon me, madam—though not entrusted by Sir George, I will, nevertheless, keep his secrets.

L. Car. That is plainly telling me he is worth nothing.

Man. By no means—Sir George, in spite of his profusion, must still be rich. He has preserved his large estate in Wales; and as to money, I do not doubt but he has a considerable sum.

L. Car. Not a guinea. I won it all from him last night.

Man. You? You, who are to become his wife?

L. Car. I might, had I not been thus fortunate.

But why should I marry him, when his riches are mine, without that ceremony.

Man. Inconsiderate man! what will be the end of his imprudence! Yet, Heaven be praised! he has still that fine estate, I just now mentioned.

L. Car. Indeed he has not—that has belonged to me these three months.

Man. To you!

L. Car. Yes—Bought for me under another name by agents; and for half its value.

Man. Madman!—Yet your ladyship must excuse me. I know your income stinted, and till the death of the Earl, your father, where could you raise sufficient to make even half the purchase?

L. Car. From Splendorville's own prodigality—from lavish presents made to me by him.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Sir George Splendorville, sir, desires to speak with you; he is at the door with Mr Blackman.

L. Car. Oh Heavens! do not let him see me here. (*She is hastening to the room where* WILLFORD *and his* DAUGHTER *are.*)

Man. I have company there—walk in here, if you please. (*Shews her another door, and she enters.*)

Man. (*to the servant.*) Desire Sir George to walk in.

Enter Sir GEORGE *and* BLACKMAN.

Man. Sir George, do me the favour to sit down. (*He looks coolly on* BLACKMAN, *and pointing to a chair, says,* "Good morning." *They sit.*)

Sir Geo. Mr Manly, my attorney, will let you know the business on which I am come.

Black. Why, yes, Mr Manly, it is extremely hard that Sir George has for so long a time been kept

out of a very large part of his fortune; particularly, as he has had occasion for it.

Sir Geo. I have had occasion for it, I assure you, Mr Manly; and I have occasion for it at this very time.

Man. But so may the person, sir, from whom you would take it. In a word, Sir George, neither your lawyer nor you, shall prevail on me to give up the trust reposed in me by your father, without certain evidence, that your sister will never come to make her claim.

Black. You are not afraid of ghosts, are you?

Man. No, nor of robbers either:——you cannot frighten me, Mr Blackman.

Black. Then, depend upon it, the sister of Sir George can never appear in any other manner than as a spirit. For, here, sir, (*taking from his pocket a parcel of papers*) here are authentic letters to prove her death. (SIR GEORGE *looks confused.*)

Man. Her death!

Black. Yes, her death. Here is a certificate from the curate of the parish in which she was buried.

Man. Buried too!

Black. Yes, sir, buried. Here is also an affidavit from the sexton of the said village, signed by the overseer and churchwardens, testifying the same.—You see, (*shewing him the paper, and reading at the same time,*) "Died Anno Domini, one thousand seven hundred and eighty nine, the seventeenth of June.——(MR MANLY *takes the paper, and while he is reading,* SIR GEORGE *says apart*—)

Sir Geo. How near to the brink of infamy has my imprudence led me! And s'death, my confusion takes from me the power to explain, and expose the scoundrel.

Mr Manly, I will leave you for the present; but you shall hear from me shortly, when this matter shall be accounted for clearly, perfectly to your satisfaction, you may depend upon it. (*Going.*

Man. Stay, Sir George, and——

Black. Aye, Sir George, stay and see Mr Manly's objections wholly removed. He seems to doubt the evidence of paper; I must, therefore, beg leave to produce a living witness—the gentleman whom I appointed to meet me here.

Man. And who is he?

Black. The apothecary, who attended Sir George's sister in her dying illness. (SIR GEORGE *starts.*

Man. Desire him to walk in by all means. What is the matter, Sir George, you look discomposed?

Black. Sir George is something nervous, Mr Manly; and you know the very name of a medical gentleman will affect the nerves of some people.

(BLACKMAN *goes to the door, and leads on* BLUNTLY *dressed in mourning.*)

Sir Geo. (*aside*) Bluntly!—But I will see the end of this.

Man. (*Bowing to him.*) You are an apothecary, I think, sir? (BLUNTLY *looks at* BLACKMAN.)

Black. Yes, sir.

Blun. (*After seeming inclined to say,* No.) Yes, sir.

Man. Pray, sir, what disorder took the young lady, on whose account you have been brought hither, out of the world? (BLUNTLY *looks at* BLACKMAN.)

Black. Oh! the old disorder, I suppose.

Blun. The old disorder.

Man. And pray what may that be, sir? (*Blackman offers to reply.*) Mr Blackman, please to let this gentleman speak for himself. What is it you mean, pray sir, by the old disorder?

Blun. I—I—mean—Love, sir.

Man. You will not pretend to say, that love was the cause of her death?

Blun. (*Confused and hesitating.*) That—and a few fits of the gout.

Man. I fear, sir, you are not in perfect health yourself—you tremble and look very pale.

Black. That is because the subject affects him.

Man. Do you then never mention the young lady without being affected?

Blun. Never, sir—for had you seen her as I did—um—Had you seen her. She was in very great danger from the first; but after I attended her, she was in greater danger still.—I advised a physician to be called in; on which she grew worse. We had next a consultation of physicians; and then it was all over with her.

Sir Geo. (*Rising from his chair.*) Blackman, this is too much; all my calamities are inferior to this—Desist, therefore, or——

Black. (*To Bluntly.*) Desist—He cannot bear to hear the pathetic description. Consider the lady was his sister; and though he had not the pleasure of knowing her; yet, poor thing—(*Affecting to weep,*)—poor young woman! he cannot help lamenting her loss.

Blun. No more can I—for though she was not my relation—yet she was my patient. (*Pretending to weep also.*)

Sir Geo. I can bear no more. Mr Manly, you are imposed upon. But think not, however appearances may be against me, that I came here as the tool of so infamous a deceit. Thoughtlessness, Mr Manly, has embarrassed my circumstances; and thoughtlessness alone, has made me employ a villain to retrieve them.

Black. Mighty fine!

Sir Geo. I have no authority, sir, to affirm that my sister is not alive; and I am confident the account you have just now heard, of her death, is but an artifice. My indiscretions have reduced me nearly to beggary; but I will perish in confinement—cheerfully perish—rather than owe my affluence to one dishonourable action.

Black. Grief has turned his brain.

Man. Sir George, I honour your feelings; and as for the feelings of these gentlemen, I am extremely happy, that it is in my power to dry up their tears, and calm all their sorrows.

Sir Geo. Sir!

Black. How? In what way?

Man. (*Going to the door where* WILLFORD *and his Niece are*) Come forth, young [illegible], to the arms of a brother, and relieve the anguish of these mourners, who are lamenting your decease. (ELEANOR *and* WILLFORD *enter.*)—Yes, Sir George, here is that sister, whom those gentlemen assure us, is dead; and this is the brother of your father. These are proofs, as convincing, I hope, as any Mr Blackman can produce.

Sir Geo. She, my sister! Her pretended father my uncle too! (*Aside.*) Blackman, you would have plunged me into an anguish I never knew before; you would have plunged me into shame.

Blun. And so you *have* me.

Black. Pshaw.—Mr Manly, notwithstanding you are these people's voucher, this appears but a scheme. These persons are but adventurers, and may possibly have about them forgeries, such as an honest man, like myself, would shudder at.

Man. (*Going to the door.*) Who's there? (*Enter Servant.*) Shew that—that Mr Blackman, out of my house instantly; and take care you never admit him again.

Black. Sir George, will you suffer this?

Sir Geo. Aye, and a great deal more.

Blun. Look'ee, Blackman—If you don't fall down upon your knees, and beg my pardon at the street door, for the trick you have put upon me, in assuring me my master's sister was really dead, and that I could do her no injury, by doing him a service—if you don't beg my pardon for this, I'll give you such an assault and battery as you never had to do with in your life.

Black. Beat me—do, beat me—I'll thank you for beating me—I'd be beat every hour of the day, to recover damages. [*Exit with* BLUNTLY.

Sir Geo. My sister—with the sincerest joy I call you by that name; and while I thus embrace you, offer you a heart, that beats with all the pure and tender affection, which our kindred to each other claims. In you (*embracing his uncle,*) I behold my father; and experience an awful fear, mingled with my regard.

Wil. Continue still that regard, and even that fear—these filial sentiments may prove important; and they shall ever be repaid with my paternal watchings, friendship, and love.

Elea. My brother——

Sir Geo. I have been unworthy of you—I will be so no more, but imitate your excellence. Yet, when I reflect——

LADY CAROLINE *comes softly from the inner apartment, and attends to the discourse.*

Elea. My brother, do not imagine——

Sir Geo. Leave me, leave me to all the agonies of my misconduct. Where is my fortune? Now *all* irrecoverably gone—My last, my only resource is now to be paid to another—I have lost every thing.

L. Car. (*Coming forward.*) No, Sir George, *nothing*—since I possess all that was yours.

Sir Geo. How?

L. Car. Behold a friend in your necessities—a mistress whom your misfortunes cannot drive away—but who, experiencing much of your unkindness, still loves you; and knowing your every folly, will still submit to honour, and obey you.

I received your lavish presents, but to hoard them for you—made myself mistress of your fortune, but to return it to you—and with it all my own.

Sir Geo. Can this be real? Can I be raised in one moment, from the depths of misery to unbounded happiness?

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. A young man, who says he is Mr Willford's son, is called to enquire for him.

Man. Shew him in.

SIR GEORGE *and* LADY CAROLINE *retire to the back part of the stage.*

Enter HENRY.

Wil. Come, Henry, and take leave of your sister for ever.

Hen. How so, sir? What do you mean? To be parted from her, would be the utmost rigour of fortune.

Man. The affection with which you speak, young gentleman, seems to convey something beyond mere brotherly love.

Wil. I some years since revealed to him she was *not* his sister.

Elea. And he, some years since, implied it to me. Yet, in such doubtful terms, I knew not which of us had the sorrow not to be your child. I now find it

is myself; and I aver it to be a sorrow, for which, all the fortune I am going to possess will not repay me.

Sir Geo. Then, my dearest sister, indulge the hope you may yet be his daughter. This young man's merit deserves a reward, and in *time* he may learn to love you by a still nearer tie than that you have so long known to exist between you; nay, even by a nearer tie than that of brother.

Hen. I am in doubt of what I hear—Eleanor, since our short separation, there cannot surely have been any important discovery—

Man. Be not surprised—great discoveries, which we labour in vain for years to make, are frequently brought about in one lucky moment, without any labour at all.

Sir Geo. True—for till this day arose, I had passed every hour since my birth without making one discovery to my advantage—while this short but propitious morning, has discovered to me all my former folly—and discovered to me how to be in future happy.

THE

WISE MAN OF THE EAST.

A

COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

FROM

THE GERMAN OF KOTZEBUE.

BY

Mrs. INCHBALD.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Richard Chances,	*Mr Clermont.*
Ava Thoanoa,	*Mr Munden.*
Claransforth,	*Mr Lewis.*
Mr Metland,	*Mr Murray.*
Ensign Metland,	*Mr H. Johnston.*
Timothy Starch,	*Mr Knight.*
Lawley,	*Mr Waddy.*
Bankwell,	*Mr Davenport.*
Waitby,	*Mr Klanert.*
Quaker Servant,	*Mr Simmons.*
Servant to Ava,	*Mr Abbot.*
Servant to Lady Mary,	*Mr Curtis.*
Lady Mary Diamond,	*Mrs Davenport.*
Mrs Metland,	*Mrs Johnson.*
Ellen Metland,	*Miss Murray.*
Rachel Starch,	*Mrs Mattocks.*
Ruth Starch,	*Mrs H. Johnston.*

Servants, &c.

SCENE,—*London.*

WISE MAN OF THE EAST.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

An apartment at CLARANSFORTH'S.

Enter SIR RICHARD CHANCES, *followed by* WAITBY.

Wai. I should be very glad to announce you, sir; but when Mr Bankwell went into the next chamber, he said he was going to transact business, and desired my master and he might not be interrupted.

Sir Ri. And do you obey your master's clerk?

Wai. He is, I assure you, sir, a man of importance in this house. All the money to supply our wants comes through his hands; and he is for ever warning my master against extravagance, and most partic larly against gaming.

Sir Ri. Then, perhaps, he will not come to our party to-night: but be sure to tell him he is expected at Lady Mary's in the evening, and that Sir Richard Chances himself left this card.

Wai. I will, sir. (*Laying it on the table and listening.*) I hear them very loud—my master flies from one room to another to get rid of Bankwell,—but the old man will pursue him. Come in this room, sir. [*Exeunt* SIR RICHARD *and* WAITBY.

Enter CLARANSFORTH, *followed by* BANKWELL.

Cla. I think, sir, I am too old to be lectur'd for my indiscretions.

Ba. Too old, perhaps, to profit by admonition; and certainly too old for youthful excesses.

Cla. Sir, I was robbed of my early pleasures. The time of youthful happiness and folly was seiz'd from my eager grasp by the severity of a rigid father:—Why not let me have my follies at a proper age? But it was your wise master's management to invert nature; to force me to be a man while I was a child;—consequently, I'm a child now I'm a man.

Ba. A counting-house was surely a proper academy for the son and heir of a merchant.

Cla. But, why so strict, that I was not permitted to live in my native country;—but shipp'd to a gloomy town across the Atlantic, where there was no such thing as folly or misdemeanor in the whole place.—Was it not beyond all doubt, that when I returned to London, the charming novelty of doing wrong wou'd overbalance all the force of habit?

Ba. It was your early propensity to pleasure which induc'd your father——

Cla. To forbid my tasting it.

Ba. His first wish was for your happiness.

Cla. And don't I make myself happy?

Ba. Through improper means. Let me intreat

you to forsake your present companions, and seek out some pretty girl——

Cla. My dear friend, with all my heart. This is a piece of advice I highly approve. Hah! I perceive your notions and mine don't differ so very widely.

Ba. Psha! Psha! I mean, seek out some sober, modest young woman, and marry.

Cla. (*Walks about*) Marry! marry!—You distress me. It's singular, Bankwell; but so it is, that of all the women I have seen, since the few months I have been in England, the woman I should prefer as a wife, I *cannot* marry.

Ba. Because she is married already, I suppose.

Cla. No; but she is not worth a guinea.

Ba. So much the better, since you are worth a million.

Cla. Would you have me marry a servant-maid?

Ba. Sooner than I'd have you betray a servant-maid.

Cla. Betray!—What you call *betraying*, is only saying a few things, to a woman, that are not to be relied upon as truth, any more than when your servant tells an impertinent visitor you are gone out, while you are at home.

Ba. I can talk no more, and keep my temper; yet there are other subjects on which I trust we may agree. Your heart was formerly open to compassion.

Cla. Formerly, Bankwell! (*With reproach.*)

Ba. When a school-boy.

Cla. Suppose me, in the instance of compassion, a school-boy still; and you shall be my tutor.

Ba. I have been informed that old Mr Metland is in great distress.

Cla. How can I relieve him?

Ba. Poor man! You recollect him?

Cla. I recollect he was my father's intimate friend.

Ba. You recollect also in what manner this unfortunate man lost his all?

Cla. I have heard you say, in our house.

Ba. The sudden death of your father has thrown a veil over the event, which heaven alone can see through; but for my part I am convinced myself of Mr Metland's deposition. He never told a lie.

Cla. What can I do for him?

Ba. I think it an act of duty that you support him: in what manner, I leave to your own discretion.

Cla. I will remember your advice, and determine what to do in a few days,—but at present I have such a number of petitioners, and applications of every kind.

Ba. There is another subject on which I have to speak to you. Your father passed his youth in India, and had many friends there. One of them, a native of a remote country, beyond our settlements, has been in London these four months; and at various places where he and I have met, he has given me testimony of the warm affection which, in their youth, subsisted between him and your father: he even says, he came over for the purpose of paying him a visit, when he found him in his grave. He has requested the favour of being introduced to you. He came with me now to your house, and is waiting in hopes of an interview.

Cla. Let him instantly be admitted; a friend of my father's must always be welcome.

Ba. He speaks English very well; but he is dressed in his country's fashion, and assumes the rough manners of a philosopher. [*Exit.*

Cla. (*taking a card from the table.*) "Pharo this evening at Lady Mary Diamond's."—A more than

usual solicitation to be present—Superfluous invitation! Where my Ellen resides, I could, with equal warmth, sue for admission.

Re-enter BANKWELL, *introducing an elderly gentleman, who has a dark Indian complexion, a long beard, and is dressed after the Eastern manner.*

Ba. Ava Thoanoa, a native of Cambodia, beyond the Ganges.

Cla. Sir, you do me honour; and I only lament that your reception here is by a representative wholly unworthy of your deceased friend, my honoured father.

Av. If you speak as you think, why not make yourself worthy of him?

Ba. Ava Thoanoa uses no ceremony; he soon becomes acquainted; and, by your permission, sir, I will leave him with you, while I step to the counting-house. I will return immediately. [*Exit.*

CLARANSFORTH *draws chairs, and* AVA *and he sit.*

Av. But, perhaps, sir, it is to the little resemblance you have to your father, except, indeed, in person, that you owe what you are pleased to call the honour of this visit; for I am an unsociable man, and seldom go into company, but for some particular purpose.

Cla. Your visit to me, I understand, was merely in compliment to my father's memory.

Av. In duty to his memory. But this is not the first time you and I have met.

Cla. I beg your pardon:—I never remember having seen you before.

Av. Because I have generally met you where there were pretty women, and they took up all your attention.

Cla. But, then, I should conceive you took up all theirs—and consequently I should attend to what they did.

Av. I engag'd their attention while I had money left. When I came first from India, I was rich, and welcome every where—but now that I am poor——

Cla. My father's friend—and reduced to poverty in a strange country! What can I do to oblige you?

Av. Reform!

Cla. How do you know that I want reformation?

Av. Because I know more than you are aware of—more than I wish to know—(*passionately.*) I have follow'd you from the pharo-table to the tavern: (*mildly,*) and sometimes from the mansions of the rich, to the huts of the poor.

Cla. Has that offended you?

Av. No; alternately I approve and condemn you. (*Passionately.*) You game, you lose large sums of money: but, when I look into your heart, I find it free from avarice.

Cla. Are you a mortal, and pretend to see my heart?

Av. You drink hard—you are frequently intoxicated: but you do this to oblige your companions.

Cla. That's true again.

Av. You gallant and toy with young women: but 'tis frequently to indulge their depravity more than your own.

Cla. Extraordinary, by heaven!

Av. You profess to love a young maiden, whom you hope to rob of her virtue.

(CLARANSFORTH *starts.*)

Av. And yet, no longer ago than yesterday, you saved an unfortunate tradesman from destruction by the gift of an hundred guineas.

Cla. I did it in secret.

Av. I was near you.

Cla. The man himself did not know me.

Av. I knew you.

Cla. Astonishing! My clerk said you were a philosopher. I pronounce you a magician. The art of magic, in the country where you were born, I know, is termed a science. I have heard my father speak of wonders he has known produced there by a certain cast of Indians. My father was rather superstitious—

Av. And his son is rather self-sufficient.

Cla. Nay, I mean to say, my father was a very good, and, in most respects, a very wise man. But he had more singularities than any Englishman I ever knew. I absolutely think he believed in ghosts.

Av. He had then cause, no doubt.

Cla. "Cause,"—Ha! ha! ha! my dear sir, I see the close acquaintance that subsisted between him and you at once; and, probably, it was to your early friendship he was indebted for some of his opinions on this subject—ha! ha! ha!

Av. No irreverent jests, sir, on my dead friend's opinions.—Your's, if they should improve, will be such as his were.

Cla. Yes—if I could see a ghost.

Av. Wou'd you believe it was one, if you did?

Cla. No!

Av. Yet you will own, wiser people than you have believed in the return of departed spirits.

Cla. I own it.

Av. And on the word of one, whom you may believe has no wish to deceive you, I once saw the spirit, the appearance of a man, whose death his friends had long lamented.

Cla. Deception! Be assur'd, deception. We are more wary in this country; and, my good friend, depend upon it, you would never think you saw such a thing in England.

Av. It was in England that I saw the apparation.

Cla. Oh! ho! In what part of England?

Av. London.—It was in my own lodgings, here in London, that the spirit came while I was merely reciting a few words, to see if I remembered the charm my Indian friends reveal'd to me: and I had proofs that I did remember it, with all the ceremony belonging to the spell, by the form that appeared.

Cla. A jocose bottle-companion, I hope.

Av. Throw off this levity. The figure which appeared to me—on the word of an old man, and a man of honour, I speak—was that of my late friend, your father.

Cla. (Starts, then resumes his carelessness.) And pray, when he came, what did he say to you?

Av. Very little.

Cla. Did he ask for *me*?

Av. He mentioned you.

Cla. And can you remember what he said?

Av. Perfectly.

Cla. A secret, perhaps?

Av. He did not forbid me to tell it.

Cla. Then, prythee, tell it me.

(*With some degree of anxiety.*)

Av. He said, that in the last hours of your mother's sickness, on her dying bed, she conjured him never to abandon you for any vice that your youthful frailty might commit.

Cla. Indian, you amaze me; for certainly my mother did leave this injunction, and my father revealed it to me as a secret, he would tell to no one else, lest it might give the world reason to suppose that my mother feared I *deserved* to be disinherited.

Av. You now then believe all I have uttered?

Cla. (*Hesitating.*) No—no—still, I can't—I won't believe it. Would you make a child of me? No!—no—you have only dreamt a dream, that has by chance revealed—though faith 'tis

singular. But be that as it will, I don't believe a word of the ghost—not a word—no—no—not a word.

Av. To prove my veracity, *(warmly,)* will you behold the spectre which I saw? Say but, yes, and name the hour, I'll raise it to your view.

Cla. Living, though my father stript me of my wealth, and sent me back to plod on a wretched spot, where all society is banished, still I should rejoice to see him. But dead—I wou'd not that my folly should disturb, or my curiosity even treat with irreverence, his honoured dust.

Av. You speak with propriety.

Cla. (After a pause.) But do you pretend that he said any thing further?

Ava. He was beginning another subject, when he was interrupted—as we are now.

Enter BANKWELL.

Ba. I beg pardon, if I have left you too long, Ava Thoanoa. I have some business which takes me away instantly—shall I attend you?

Av. (Bows gravely to CLARANSFORTH.*)* Good day, sir.

Cla. (With reserve and coolness.) Good day, sir. [*Exeunt* BANKWELL *and* AVA.

Now, is he a wise man, or a mad man—a knave, or a fool. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A room in MR METLAND'S *house*—MRS METLAND *alone knitting—A book open on the table before her, in which, at the same time, she is reading.*

Mrs Me. When I was young, poets wrote their sonnets of love under a thatched roof, and were contented with bread and milk. Twenty years later this sweet contentment is turned into ridicule: but with me it remains, and I revere it.

Enter ENSIGN METLAND, *with a pocket-book in his hand.*

En. Good morning, dear mother.

Mrs Me. Welcome, dear Charles! What do you bring me?

En. My whole heart, and the half of my pay. *(Giving her a bank-note.)*

Mrs Me. Dear boy, how can you content yourself with the other half?

En. Were not you contented, mother, when, with your small income, my father purchased my commission?

Mrs Me. We can live sparingly; but you must do honour to your rank as an officer.

En. And if ever my general shou'd ask me, why my regimentals look rusty, my answer will not, I think, disgrace the service.

Mrs Me. You are young, and should enjoy life.

En. I do: By puting these little monthly savings into your hands, I am thus furnished each time with four weeks' enjoyment of life.

Mrs Me. (Clasps him in her arms.) Dear Charles!

Enter ELLEN.

Ellen here also! (*Embracing her.*) My dear Ellen, 'tis so long since I have seen you! Children, you give me a cheerful morning.

El. Dear brother, we have not seen each other this great while!

En. Is that my fault? Why do you forbid my coming to see you?

El. I only wish to keep my mean situation a secret, to prevent you from being sneered at in the honourable one you hold. "Ensign Metland is "brave," I often hear your old colonel say, when he visits my lady. My eyes immediately become moist with tears, and the work I am about trembles under my hand—I am reproved for my negligence; but that I do not mind, while I listen to my brother's praise.

En. But Lady Mary Diamond already knows—

El. Her ladyship has too many concerns of her own, and too much pride, to trouble herself about my family. She knows I have a father and mother, and where they live—and that is all: therefore I shall pursue my usual course; and in the house of Lady Mary Diamond I shall always drop a curtsy to Ensign Metland; while, in this house, he will ever be my dear brother Charles. And now, my dear mother, here is a small portion (*whispers*) of my savings. (*Puts into her hand two pieces of gold.*)

Mrs Me. This is too soon again, my child—I fear you deprive yourself.

El. No, indeed, dear mother.

Mrs Me. But I entreat you both not to make known to your father the assistance you give us. His mistaken pride wou'd rather let him perish than live on your bounty. Hush! I hear him coming.
(*Conceals the money she had received.*)

Enter MR METLAND, *with a bundle of papers under his arm. When he comes in at the door, he starts.*

Me. Hey-day! I have just left a fine furnished house; but my own hut is more finely ornamented. (*His son and daughter meet, and* ELLEN *kisses him.*) Welcome! children, welcome! How do you do?

El. Very well, dear father.

Me. And you?

En. Tolerable.

Me. Why, but tolerable?

En. You know, Sir, that I want—

Me. A good and courageous heart is all that a soldier wants; and that I am sure you possess.

En. It is my paternal inheritance.

Me. If that is true, you are a rich heir, although my purse is empty, and these walls almost bare.

En. But—inconveniences at your time of life.

Me. What do you call inconveniences? Those who can supply their wants are well supported.

En. Can you do that?

Me. Oh yes, for I am content. Do you think your mother and I go fasting to bed? No—no—What my industry daily produces, her dear hands daily prepares; and our homely fare is made delicious by her constant cheerfulness and serenity. If ever you perceive tears in her eyes, the smoke of the kitchen fire is the cause of them.

Mrs Me. Yes, my dear husband, I should be contented; quite satisfied, if only—

Me. No one lives whose contentment is not, at times, crossed by an "if only." Let us hear the tendency of your "if only."

Mrs Me. If only—Ellen were not obliged to be a servant.

Me. And what is her servitude? Your daughter is a waiting-maid, and obliged to humour the whims and caprices of another woman, which prevents her having leisure to indulge her own.

Mrs Me. It grieves me to think she is as a stranger in our house.

Me. (*Pressing Ellen's hands.*) She will never be a stranger in our hearts. No! never, never!

Mrs Me. You have again brought home a large heap of papers, Mr Metland.

Me. Yes; heaven be thanked! there is work for a whole month; and, "if only"—There, now, I have caught myself at an "if only."

Mrs Me. Explain it—intrust its meaning to your family.

Me. I was going to say, "if only" my debts were paid—then anxiety would not alone be cast from my heart, but, what would please me much more, from the hearts of my creditors. (*Sighing.*)

En. How was it possible, my father, that, with your industry and temperance, you should have creditors?

El. How can you ask, brother? Consider the expense of our education.

Me. The expense of your education, children, has been defrayed from a capital which is inexhaustible—Parental care accomplished it. No, my dear, a misfortune that befel me a year ago, has impoverished us so much, that, at my advanced life, it will be impossible for my labour to retrieve me.

Mrs Me. We were both poor when we married; but we had, through care, saved up a handsome fortune.

Me. Twelve thousand pounds.

Mrs Me. Which your father took to the rich merchant Claransforth.

El. Claransforth! (*In confusion.*)

Mrs. Me. The present young merchant's father.

Me. He was my friend.

En. And wronged you?

Me. That would have hurt me much more than the loss of my money. No; he meant me well, and was to have given me a share in his flourishing business. But it happened, that, on the very evening when I took to him my long-collected store, he was overwhelmed with letters and papers by the sudden arrival of a foreign mail, and could not at that moment give me a receipt for what I placed in his hands.

Mrs Me. That very night part of Claransforth's house was burnt to the ground, and Claransforth himself perished.

Me. I lost a proved friend.

Mrs Me. And the indefatigable earnings of twenty years.

El. (*In agitation.*) And could his son be so base as to deny the debt?

Me. His son was abroad at the time, and a total stranger to me. On his arrival, he proves to be a man of pleasure—a fine gentleman, who neglects all kind of business. The executors judged of my case, and did their duty. I had no vouchers.

En. But Claransforth's books—your word—your oath?

Me. None of his books were lost by the fire, and the sum was not entered in any of them. Bankwell, his trusty clerk, was questioned on the subject: he spoke to the fairness of my character; but could say no more. Every place was searched. I described the notes, the cords they were tied with. All was in vain—nothing could be found, and I was ruined.

Mrs. Me. Enough, and already too much, of a luckless hour. I count my good fortune by years.

El. Dear father and mother, I fear I must be gone. My lady expects company to breakfast, about three this afternoon; and ordered me to return in time to dress her.

Me. I don't like such irregular hours for meals. I hope there is nothing else irregular in your lady's family. You blush. At what hour do you go to bed?

El. Immediately after her ladyship.

Me. There's an equivocation in that reply. I asked you the time ye went to bed—the exact time.

El. Do you mean the rest of the servants, or only me?

Me. Again equivocation?

Mrs Me. Dear husband! she comes scarcely more than once a month to see us; and, then, do not be too hard upon her—She has no meaning in her answers.

Me. So it seems.

Mrs Me. I would say, no design to deceive you: she is a good girl. (*Shaking her hand kindly.*)

Me. I take her to be such, or she would have no business here, though she is my daughter.

En. No tears, Ellen—you will anger my father still more.

Me. What! does she weep? Ellen, I love you dearly; and your person, as a female, and my child, I am bound to protect. But your *mind* you must guard yourself. Over that I have no controul, but such as you are pleased to bestow by your confidence; and when you so trust and empower me, I'll be its guardian, or depute my son with my authority. These affectionate terms I offer, supposing you all that's amiable and good.

Mrs Me. She is; I am sure she is.

Me. Who suspects she is not? I am only adverting to what it is possible she may hereafter be. And, then, neither to her mind or person am I a protector, or is this house her home.

Mrs Me. (*Supporting Ellen, who flies to her in terror.*) You are a harsh man; a very good, honest man; but too austere with those of less fortitude than yourself. [*Exit with* ELLEN.

Me. Charles, I have spoken something warmer to your sister than I intended. I did not mean to make her weep, especially as she comes so seldom to see us. Follow her, Charles, and your mother, and say I was a little hasty. Go—it does not become me to own myself to blame. But invite Ellen to stay, and take some dinner with us, and I'll come in by the time you are all sat down. You know, Charles, I am often harsh with you; and yet I love you. You know I am sometimes even severe with your mother; yet, heaven is my witness! this world would be nothing to me without her mild society. You know my temper, Charles—you know, too, that irritable temper has met with some sharp trials.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A room in the house of TIMOTHY STARCH.

Enter RACHEL STARCH *and* TIMOTHY STARCH, *followed by* RUTH STARCH.

Ra. Timothy, Timothy, I say unto thee, that Claransforth, the merchant, is the man whom I have chosen, from amongst all other of her suitors, to be the spouse of thy daughter Ruth.

Tim. What will our elders say to such a marriage? For neighbour Claransforth is not one of the faithful.

Ra. But he is one of the rich.

Tim. It is asked by pious speakers, "Of what "value are riches?"

Ra. And it is answered by other pious speakers, "Of a great deal." How can a man give to the poor, while he is poor himself?

Tim. Thou art right. What can a man give who possesseth nothing? What produceth alms but mo-

ney? Verily, what doth money not produce? And, that my daughter shall be wedded to a rich husband, maketh me content.

Ra. It maketh me glad; and it should cause thee, maiden, to rejoice with exceeding great joy.

Ru. Verily, verily, thou has often instructed me, not to rejoice with over much gladness for that which passeth away.

Tim. And it is a precept thou art bound to follow, in imitation of thy father, who has never, since he came to man's estate, suffered himself to feel either joy or sadness, grief or merriment; but has passed his life in an uniform dullness, and insensibility to all around. And I am thankful that it is so; for, though I never felt love, I have likewise never known hate. Though I am steeled to pity, I am also proof against anger: and I never in my life did any harm, though I never did any good.

Ra. Ruth Starch, when wilt thou boast thus? And I say unto thee, Ruth, when the merchant, Claransforth, shall offer to take thee in marriage, wilt thou reject or accept him?

Ru. Peradventure he may never offer.

Tim. Then, why cometh he here to smile and to simper; to gaze and to sigh; to bow to thy mother, and shake hands with me?

Ru. Doth it follow, that a young man must marry in every house where he gazeth and shaketh hands?

Ra. Ruth, Ruth, thou art not inclined to wed. Claransforth; neither any of the friends that frequent our meeting-house. To what am I to ascribe this coldness?

Ru. Verily, to the cold of which my father is composed; for I liken him unto a *snow-ball*, and myself unto a *snow-drop*.

Ra. But it is ordained that thou should'st marry.

Ru. It is also ordained that I first be wooed.

Ra. And canst thou say that Claransforth has not wooed thee?

Ru. I can affirm that he hath never asked me to become his wife.

Ra. He will ask thee.

Ru. Then I will answer.

Ra. How—in what manner?

Ru. As the spirit moveth.

Enter a QUAKER SERVANT.

Ser. A man bedecked in scarlet, he whom thou hast long ago desired me to watch, slily put this letter into my hand, and required of me to give it as slily to Ruth, whom he called my young mistress.

Tim. Give the letter to me. (*Servant gives him the letter.*)

Ra. (*To the servant.*) And go thou back to the man in scarlet, and say unto him, Follow me to Ruth, who wisheth to commune with thee.

[*Exit* SERVANT.

Ru. I want not to commune with any man.

Ra. But I and thy father do.

Tim. (*After reading the letter.*) Yea; it behoveth us to rebuke this man, who is, I perceive, by his subscription, he whom we suspected—the son of the ruined Metland; and when he cannot behold Ruth by besetting the house, writes unto her foolish epistles, called love-letters.

Enter SERVANT, *showing in* ENSIGN METLAND, *who starts.*

Thou art surprised to be brought before the parents, when thou didst only expect to see the maiden, whom thou affrontest by thy wanton love.

En. I am, I own, amazed at the deceit by which I was allured hither; but I deny the epithet which

you have given to my passion; for it is sincere, it is pure, it is honourable.

Tim. And, in answer to all thy pretensions—I say unto thee, young man, thou wearest a red coat.

En. I scorn illiberal reproaches, or else I would say in return—

Tim. What! what would'st thou say?

En. That you—wear a brown one.

Tim. Is there any reproach in that?

En. Surely not. Who but reverences the modes of your sect, the sober decency of your habit and manners; the steady sobriety of your men, the modest demeanour of your women; that timid retiring disposition, that simple clothing, tending to form the humble handmaid, the obedient wife, the meritorious mother.

Tim. What importeth thy elocution? It is not only I, and my spouse, who dislike thee; but that damsel hath natural fear and terror of a soldier. Hast thou not, Ruth?

Ru. Yea, verily, I have fear and terror of an army of soldiers; but of one, all alone by himself, I am not much afraid.

Ra. Thou speakest unwarily: one soldier alone, in a young maiden's apartment, is more dangerous than ten thousand in the field.

Ru. Thou fillest me with astonishment! To be in the midst of a swarm of bees is perilous; but if one bee hums and buzzes about me, I think, with a little watching, I could suffer it to sip honey even from the nosegay in my bosom.

Tim. Daughter, do not compare a soldier to a harmless bee; he is a lion.

Ru. The terror of the lion is in his fangs and his paws; that of a soldier in his firelock and bayonet, but when he lays aside his arms, peradventure, he is as gentle as any other of his fellow creatures.

Tim. Ruth! Ruth! thy sayings are unwise.

Ra. And I command thee to depart from among us.

Ru. I will show obedience to my mother,—even such obedience as I would show to the husband of my choice. [*Exit.*

Tim. Come, Rachel, we will also retire. And now, friend, being left alone, I trust thou wilt likewise depart. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

A room at LADY MARY DIAMOND'S.

Enter CLARANSFORTH, *met by a* SERVANT.

Ser. Lady Mary will wait on you immediately. [*Exit.*

Cla. I leave this house of a night, vowing never to return to it again; and, in the morning, the first visit I pay is here. It is in vain to resist—I cannot keep away; but, not like other gamesters, I come. The cards and dice, which I seem to love, and are placed in my reach, are my abhorrence while the woman, whom I must not seem to love and is out of my reach—

Enter ELLEN.

El. Her ladyship is busy at present, sir, and desired me to say—

Cla. How fortunate! One would suppose she knew the blessing she bestowed on me, in deputing you, instead of coming herself.

El. She desired me to say, sir, that if you cannot now wait till she comes, she begs you will not disappoint her of your company in the evening.

Cla. In the evening I shall not perhaps see you; but I owe her my company *then* for the pleasure she has given me *now*. Therefore, assure her I will be here. (*Ellen is going.*) Stay, stay, a moment! or, by heaven! I'll not come. Do you not know that you are my sole attraction to this house; that, but for you, I should never enter it?

El. Then you have me to blame for all your ill luck at cards.

Cla. And for all my good fortune in society; for it is the impression on my mind, of your sweetness, which makes other things pleasing to me; of your worth, that makes other things worthy. You smile with incredulity; but, remember, I am a merchant, and value truth and fair dealing beyond my life.

El. You mean to say, your conscience is your book-keeper.

Cla. I mean, that my heart I consider as the most valuable among all my goods.

El. Would you make merchandise of your heart?

Cla. No; but I would give it away.

El. Men and children give things away; but soon take them back again.

Cla. Put me to the trial.

El. Sir, your conversation degrades you. You forget what I am.

Cla. You are not what you ought to be.

El. Do not persuade me to think so. I would fit my sentiments to my situation.

Cla. Rather alter that which fate has thrown you in. You serve, and might command.

El. I am content, while I enjoy command over myself.

Cla. Why not be the mistress of me, and of all that is mine? Why not confer happiness, while you would secure your own? Why these doubts and suspicions of a man who loves you?

El. Why this ridicule of one who has never offended you?

Cla. Ridicule! If you could see my heart, Ellen, you have too much justice to insult my passion. —Indeed, I love you! I adore you!

El. Oh, Mr Claransforth! (*in great agitation.*)

Cla. For heaven's sake! you alarm me. What's the matter?

El. I am not eighteen, you are almost twice my age, and nature has given you an understanding which education and intercourse with the world has rendered far superior to mine. Can it be wondered that your attentions have flattered my vanity; that your professions captivate my heart? Your addresses have the same weight with me that similar addresses have with similar young women; and I tremble lest the event should be the same. If I fly from you, you will pursue me; if I vow never to submit, you will determine to conquer: but here, without another struggle for victory, I claim your protection. Weapons of resistance I have none; yet do not take advantage of my weakness. Yielding, I beg for mercy, let me live with honour. (*Kneeling.*)

Cla. (*Aside.*) She has fixed on the only method; she agitates me beyond bearing. (*To her.*) You know not how you distress me. I cannot in this house explain all I wish, to prove my love to be real, my friendship lasting: leave this place, throw yourself solely on my protection. The name of wife is but a vain appendage to the union of hearts; and, under my roof—

El. You make me shudder—Can such an offer be the result of my candid declaration? But, I thank you, sir. You have no mercy, no pity for me, and you change my love to hate. [*Exit.*

Cla. Would mine could be so changed! But that I fear, is fixed. Hark! she is returning. Provoking! her lady is with her. Now, there I could hate most cordially, without one effort.

[*Exit on the opposite side.*

Re-enter ELLEN, *followed by* LADY MARY DIAMOND.

L. Ma. Do you suppose I took you into my house for the employment I pretended? to take care of my dresses, and fix them becomingly about my person? Do you imagine, that with these soft engaging manners, formed to seduce the other sex, I would have had near me a rival such as you, but for some more important use?

El. Dreadful! (*aside.*) What use?

L. Ma. That which you have already been to me. Why do you think I suffered you to ride by my side through London streets, but that you might be followed by unthinking fools, who enrich our pharo-bank? You are the allurement of half those madmen who lose to me their fortune; but of all those Claransforth is by far the richest and the least suspicious of our aim:—him, then, you must manage artfully; and beware how you quarrel with him.

El. But, if he quarrels with me——?

L. Ma. Then make it up, kiss, and friends. Why do you start? Tears!—then I suspect—Idiot! Fool! Now, you have no further power, and we have lost him as a visitor. Is this your prudery? I thought, notwithstanding your poverty, you were of a virtuous, honourable family.

El. And so I am.

L. Ma. I thought that you, yourself, were nicely delicate.

El. And so I am.

L. Ma. O! I give you joy; for then your power may not be over; but if so, of what have you to complain?

El. That his behaviour first gained my affection, and now excites my hatred.

L. Ma. Are you sure you hate him?

El. His very name gives me torture.

L. Ma. I understand, he planned your ruin. In return, I will instruct you how to accomplish his.

El. (*starts*) Not for the world!

L. Ma. You love him, it seems, then, still. So much the better. I'll point out the way you shall become his wife. Our party entertain the hope that, in an honourable way at the game of pharo, we may, perhaps, soon make him poor as you are. On this very evening's play some considerable bets are laid, that he'll not be a rich man to-morrow morning. A select company sup here this evening. You must be present; and take care that Claransforth be of the party. In the mean time, guard safely these instruments of wealth and articles of transfer between us gaming jobbers. (*Gives dice and a paper to Ellen.*) Only, my dear Ellen, draw Claransforth here to-night; and by to-morrow, reduced to poverty, he will offer you his hand in marriage.

El. That would be triumph indeed!

L. Ma. I knew you would think it so. And there will be yet, perhaps, some wreck of his fortune left, that may allow you both a comfortable support. And you, I know, with a hundred a year, and half a dozen children, will be completely happy.

El. I could be happy on a less income.

L. Ma. But you must write to Claransforth immediately; and, seeming to make all up with him, persuade him to keep his appointment, else he'll not be here. Come, be cheerful, he shall be your husband still; and, with him and virtue, you'll be as rich as an empress. Go, write to him.

El. No, madam; as I have preserved myself from his designs, I have no malice towards him, and will not be an accomplice in his ruin.

L. Ma. I thought you wished him very ill.

El. I thought so too.

L. Ma. Ay, you relent. But have a care; do as I have ordered you; and see he comes to meet the company that expects him; or, when all hopes of his joining us are over, I will send you home to your parents, as unworthy of staying a moment longer in my family, as one devoted to Claransforth; and the very degradation which you dread shall be the stigma with which I will return you to your parents. [*Exit.*

El. (*Alone.*) I do not think of myself. Ruin! beggary! poverty! perhaps distraction! To see Claransforth reduced to all these.—The very apprehension has awakened all the tenderness I thought for ever gone. No! it would be my duty to save any of my fellow creatures from such calamity:—and to save him, I find, will be my delight. But how? He would not believe, were I merely to send him a letter on the subject, stating my suspicions. He would consider it as some new artifice, my love had contrived, to draw him back to me. Unprincipled as he is himself, he is wholly unsuspecting of the wicked gamesters who visit this house. How, then, can I convince him without proof? And proof is, perhaps here—(*examines what Lady Mary has put into her hand*). Dice! loaded, false dice, perhaps, and a paper signed by Sir Richard Chances, Lady Mary,

and others. A wicked plot for Claransforth's destruction. I will take all these—Yes, I will take them all; and with my own hands safely place them in his—then, bid him farewell for ever. [*Exit.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

Berkeley Square.

Enter CLARANSFORTH, *reading a letter.*

Cla. It is her hand, or else I could not have believed she would have acted so inconsistently. Ah! Woman! Woman!—Not three hours ago, she drove me from her sight for ever, and now appoints a meeting in this square, almost at twilight. If I should have miss'd her:—for whether she meant to be on

this, or that side, she was in too much haste to tell me.

Enter AVA, *who passeth* CLARANSFORTH.

Cla. (*turns and calls after him.*) Ah! my Indian friend! How do you do? I am glad to meet you once again. You didn't see a young woman pass any-where here lately, did you?

Av. A young woman!

Cla. Ay, a young woman.

Av. What sort of a woman?

Cla. Why, zounds, if you must know, a pretty girl.

Av. I take no notice of pretty girls; especially in the streets of London.

Cla. No, you would prefer them at your lodgings; and 'tis better, more prudent for a man of your age.

Av. No, sir, I don't mean——

Cla. Don't be in a passion. I shall take mine to lodgings, as soon as I can find her. But you must get out of the way when she comes, for she is so timid, so bashful, and so innocent!

Av. Innocent! Then do not *you* be guilty.

Cla. Psha! an appointment like this. But tell me, my honest friend; you, who can penetrate her thoughts, my thoughts, and every body's thoughts! who can converse with spirits, and learn all their secrets! tell me, when my mistress arrives, will she be kind, or cruel?

Av. Both!

Cla. Equivocation! But oracles never speak in direct terms. However, my dear friend, as you once made the offer to show me my dead father, I'll change the mode of the obligation, and, instead of him, bring me, immediately, the girl I am waiting for.

Enter ELLEN. AVA *bows, as if he had done what he was desired, and immediately walks away.*

Cla. (*calling after him.*) Lucky rascal! Thank you a thousand times. My dear Ellen! I have been so anxious——

El. And so have I—and so frightened! I have been prevented coming till now, and now 'tis almost dark, and I tremble so!

Cla. My dearest Ellen! my charming love!

El. No flattery; but hold your hand; and let me be sure you have them safe.

Cla. What?

El. Oh! I fear'd to trust any other person; lest by some accident you shou'dn't receive them; or not attend to the warning given by other means than my word.

Cla. Dice! (*looking at what she gave him.*)

El. False dice made for your ruin, which was to be accomplish'd this very evening. Read this paper. —Instructions to the party, sign'd by Sir Richard. —You'll find I have no malice to you, Mr Claransforth; although I have formed my resolution, that we now, on this spot, end our acquaintance for ever.

Cla. (*reading the paper.*) "Credulous dupe, Cla- "ransforth. When I throw sixes, be sure to bet— "Our different shares not less than fifteen thousand "pounds, besides Lady Mary's demand.

"Richard Chances.'

Cla. Sir Richard too! my pretended friend! And would nothing but my whole fortune content them? My escape is miraculous—Dear lovely being—My guardian angel!

El. But my lady threaten'd, should I not be accessary to this combination against you, she would send me home to my father's in disgrace.

Cla. Contemn her threats. This paper, these in-

struments of fraud, and my word, shall vindicate your fame. But you faint, suffer me to convey you—

El. (*in a tremulous voice.*) To my father's instantly; and let my lady's bad word follow me, if it must be so. I will plead my own cause to my dear parents, tell them I have only done my duty to you; then promise them faithfully never to see you more.

Cla. Never see me more! Oh, Ellen! impossible—You do not mean it. Where is your father's house? I'll take you to him myself, and tell him all your wond'rous worth.

El. Oh! not for the world. I would not, for the world, you should accompany me. My father is a most severe man, nicely suspicious. Only put me in a coach, and direct me home.

Cla. Suffer me, at least, to go with you part of the way. Where do your parents live? Now, I hope, you will no longer refuse to let me know your father's name?

El. My reasons for concealment are at this time more strong than ever. I cannot, will not disclose my name. Only desire the coachman to drive towards the City-Road.

Cla. Her father a severe man, nicely suspicious! If I resign her now, she is lost to me for ever. I cannot—'tis impossible (*aside.*) I see a coach—It's coming this way—I'll secure it, and be with you instantly. [*Exit.*

El. Oh! grant my mother may be at home, and not my father, when I first go in. To her I can better account, than to him, for my unexpected return, the necessity of quitting my service, and all I have done.

CLARANSFORTH *returns with a* HACKNEY-COACHMAN.

Cla. (*Aside to the Coachman.*) I shall tell you "the City-Road;" but drive to the corner house—(*Whispers and gives him money.*) [*Exit* COACHMAN.

El. (*Going to* CLARANSFORTH.) You are very good. I thank you for your trouble Oh! that my parents may receive me kindly.

Cla. Lean on me—don't tremble so ——. (*Aside, as he leads her off.*) Oh, passion! passion! what a fiend art thou! While I practice cruelty, my heart is torn with pity. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A room in MR METLAND'S *house.*

Enter METLAND, *and sits. A knocking at the doo*

Me. Come in.

Enter a LAWYER'S CLERK.

Cl. A letter, sir.

Me. From Mr Lawley, the attorney?

Cl. Yes, sir. [*Exit*

Me. Why this dread of breaking the seal? I am prepared for the worst. (*Opens the letter.*) "I am "sorry to inform you, that all your intreaties have "proved fruitless. This moment I have received "orders from your creditors to seize your goods: "I hasten to give you notice, that you may not feel "the blow wholly unprepared, and that you may "take advantage of the night to let your furniture "be removed, in order to avoid all impertinent ob- "servations in the neighbourhood." I thank you,

friend. "In half an hour's time I shall be with "you." (*After a pause.*) Well, then, come and take all! My wife, my children, and my heart, you cannot take from me! (*Throws himself into an arm-chair, and covers his face with his hands.*)

Enter MRS METLAND.

Mrs Me. What is the matter, dear husband? (*Metland turns himself towards her, and holds out his hand.*) Good heaven! what thus affects you?

Me. I was considering what you would do, should I fall sick.

Mrs Me. How came this into your mind? I hope you are not ill?

Me. No; but I am growing old; and that thought makes me melancholy. How would you be able to maintain an infirm man? What would you do?

Mrs Me. I would sell all, except your bed, and one chair—on which I would sit by your bed-side.

Me. And sleep yourself on straw?

Mrs Me. Why not? It is a bed on which thousands repose.

Me. And were I to get well again?

Mrs Me. We would resume our usual work: and, when we had earned sufficient to buy the first pillow —oh! how softly should we rest!

Me. My faithful, my good wife! we have now, at this moment, nothing left. This very night we sleep on straw. In a few minutes these few goods will be seized by my creditors.

Mrs Me. (*Alarmed.*) This evening!

Me. I expect their attorney every moment. The evening is an advantage that his humanity grants to the delicacy of our situation.

Mrs Me. (*In great agitation, but recovers herself by force.*) Well, well; I now thank you for the sad introduction to this disclosure. (*Drys her tears.*)

It would have been much worse, had I been obliged to sell all, to nurse a dearly beloved husband.

Me. Thus I expected to find you ;—and thus I do find you. Yes, Eleanor, we are the persons best able to bear misfortunes; for we have done what we could to avert them. We have been diligent and frugal, and we now dare fold our hands, and pray with confidence, that heaven will assist us.

Mrs Me. Suppose you go to your son Charles for a few months, and I to my dear Ellen.

Me. Would you part from me? rob me of my only comfort? When Providence cast poverty into one scale of my life, she threw into the other the bliss of matrimony, and the last scale sunk.—We, therefore, will live together " till death do us part."

(*Embracing her.*)

Enter LAWLEY.

La. (*Speaking to some one without.*) Wait in the outer-room till I call you. (*Goes to Mr and Mrs Metland.*) Believe me, dear Mr Metland, that, during the thirteen years I have been in my profession, I never practised it so unwillingly as to-day.

Me. To shew compassion is a benefaction. Do your duty—We are prepared.

La. I am glad to find you so. I admire your fortitude; and could almost call you happier than the rigorous men in whose names I now appear.

Mrs Me. Here are the keys to all which our house contains.

La. (*To Mrs Metland.*) You will have the goodness to point out to me what is *your* particular property.

Mrs Me. Nothing, sir.

La. In presents—plate, linen, and so forth.

Mrs Me. I was but a poor girl when my husband married me, and brought him nothing except my heart.

La. Consider, you are both now verging into years; and if deprived of every convenience—

Me. Under what pretence should we keep any thing back as presents from men who have already lost too much by us; or as gain, from a known fraud?

La. (*moved.*) I perceive that you are richer than the world supposes. Well, then, let us make a beginning.—Is this writing-desk open? (*Metland opens it.*) Won't you take out your papers?

Me. (*While he takes out the papers.*) You must know, that, of all I possess, the loss of this writing-desk grieves me most.

La. One gets accustomed to a favourite piece of furniture.

Me. It is not that. This writing-desk once belonged to my old friend, the late Claransforth. He sat before it when I saw him for the last time. After his death, I wish'd to keep something for his sake; and this desk was given to me by his executors, at the request of his old clerk, Bankwell.

La. It was but little to give, considering the great loss which, as it is said, you had just sustained.

Me. It is now empty—Here is the key.

La. Have you taken out every thing?

Me. Yes, every thing.

La. Why, here is a spring and a secret drawer.

Me. Not that I know of.

La. (*Touching a spring, which throws forth a drawer.*) A drawer, and full of papers.

Me. (*surprised.*) They don't belong to me.

La. A whole parcel of bank-notes.

Me. (*Looks at them.*) Gracious Power! that is my money.

La. Is it possible?

Me. Those are my twelve thousand pounds, tied just as I left them.

Mrs Me. God! thou art near us in the hour of trial.

Me. Mr Lawley, (*examining the notes,*) this is the same money which I carried to old Claransforth the evening before he died.

La. I understand. Now all is cleared up: the old man put by his friend's money safe enough.

Mrs Me. He was just then busily employed, and, certainly, put it hastily out of his hand into this drawer.

La. It is clear, it is clear! And I am fortunate that heaven has chosen me for the instrument of this recovery. Mr Metland, I wish you joy, with all my heart, (*shakes him by the hand.*) and return home a far happier man than I came. (*Going.*)

Me. Stop, Mr Lawley. Dare I make use of this money?

La. Why not? It is your own. Is it not found, exact, as you have always described it?

Me. But have I not just said, that the papers which this writing-desk now contains, do not belong to me?

La. They do belong to you.

Me. When the executors of my old friend made me this present, did they know of its contents? And dare I call that my own, which, by chance, remained in the desk of a deceased person, whose inheritor I am not? Dare I keep silent on this occurrence? May not some other thing be in the drawer, besides these bank-notes?

La. (*Casts a look.*) Very true. And there lays a letter sure enough, which, on our first joy, escaped our notice.

Me. A letter!—To whom?

La. (*reads the direction:*) "To my son, Edward "Claransforth. Not to be opened till after my "death."

Me. Now—what now!—Must I embezzle that letter too?

La. What has this letter to do with your money?

Mc. I shall carry both to young Claransforth.

La. Take my advice—Young Claransforth is unthinking and dissipated. Who knows but that he is capable of accepting the money, and, in a very easy manner, returning you thanks?

Me. In fulfilling the duty of an honest man, I do not therefore renounce my right. Yet, to invest myself with this property, without an explanation, I will not.

La. I see you are determined, and I shall say no more—Do as you please: and, if Claransforth is not dishonest, you may now pay all your debts, and live in comfort the rest of your life.—So I shall tell those who sent me, and my business here will be over; for which I shall be heartily glad. With a heavy heart I came into this house; with a light one I leave it.

[*Exit.*

Me. You do not say a single word to all this.

Mrs Me. I will not deny, that to me your virtue appears rather too strict. Is the money not unquestionably yours?

Me. This is enough for my conscience, but not for example sake.—In a word, my dear Eleanor, I feel that I could not enjoy it without the full consent of young Claransforth. Early to-morrow morning I will hasten to him, and put an end to our suspense and argument at once. (*A loud rap at the door.*)—A loud rap at this house! Can it be my son?

Mrs Me. No; for he took leave of me, going out of town on duty till to-morrow noon.

L. Ma. (*without.*) If Mr and Mrs Metland live here, I must see them immediately. (*Enter* LADY MARY.) My dear, good, worthy people, how do you both do? I beg pardon for disturbing you at this late hour; but I could not go to rest without seeing and speaking to your daughter Ellen.

Mrs Me. Is she not at your ladyship's?

Me. She is not at home, madam.

L. Ma. (*affecting surprise.*) Not at home!—Are you sure of it? Both sure of it?

Me. Yes; both.

L. Ma. Why, then, I have only to say, Heaven bless you, good people!—and good night.

Mrs Me. Dear madam, stay and relieve my mind.

Me. (*going up to her.*) Tell me the worst.

L. Ma. The task is too difficult. Excuse me—No, I cannot.

Me. Look at my poor wife. Kill her at once, or relieve her.

L. Ma. Why, then, your daughter not being at home, where I did hope, (though I must own I feared I should not find her,) confirms me that she is—

Mrs Me. Not dead?

Me. Not worse than dead?

L. Ma. Why, that is as you may consider it.—Life to most people is precious—And yet, life, with loss of honour—(*They start.*)—But don't suppose I come to acquaint you with any thing of this kind for *certain*. All I know is, that your daughter, in tears, confessed to me, this morning, her love for a gentleman who occasionally visits at my house; and who had plainly declared to her, as she informed me, that his intentions towards her were not such as her friends would approve.—Yet, knowing this—and after all the good advice I gave her—she was seen this very evening, since dark, with that self-same man, in a hackney coach; and not returning to me by the hour my doors are always locked, I thought it my duty to come and state all this to you, her parents, that no reproach may rest on my character.

Me. Tell me the villain's name with whom she is fled!

L. Ma. There I must beg to be excused. He is a gay man: but all men are gay now-a-days.—And your daughter is a young woman: but all women are young now-a-days.

Me. But, madam—the name of the libertine?

L. Ma. I trust, Mr Metland, as a man of honour, you will not compel me to divulge that part of my story. Consider, you have a son in the army; and were I so indiscreet as to reveal names, a duel might ensue, and you, by to-morrow, be childless.

Mrs Me. I thank you for your foresight.

Me. And I submit.—She is not worth the hazard of a brother's life. Even I would not expose myself for her, such as she *is!*—though, to have preserved her what she *was*, I would have died with joy!

L. Ma. I am sincerely glad to find you both so rational; and, as it is very late, and a very dreadful night, and I have great compassion for my horses—(one should be kind to dumb creatures,) I'll take my leave.—Adieu! I hope you think I have done my duty. Good night! [*Exit.*

Me. "Good night!"—Can we have a good night?

Mrs Me. No! The repose we promised to ourselves, from the contents of that desk, is gone for ever.

Me. (*Laying hold of her hand.*) Our daugher is gone for ever—and all the gold and gems contained in the whole world, would not repay us for her loss. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

The lodgings of AVA THOANOA.

Enter AVA, *followed by a* SERVANT.

Av. Who do you say has called, since I have been out?

Ser. Only this gentleman. (*Gives a card.*)

Av. Claransforth!—What could bring him here?

Ser. The gentleman seemed very sorry you were not at home; and said he would call again.—Here he is, sir. [*Exit.*

Enter CLARANSFORTH.

Av. Good morning, Mr Claransforth!

Cla. Good morning, Ava!—I hope you are very well? (*Throws himself in a chair.*)

Av. You do not seem as if *you* were.

Cla. Why, yes, pretty well—I can't say I am very well.

Av. The honour of a visit from you is totally unexpected. How came you to know where I live? I don't remember your having asked me for my address.

Cla. Bankwell, my clerk; he who introduced you—I asked him for it. (*Sighs heavily.*)

Av. But, from the company I left you in last night, I could scarcely have expected to see you abroad thus early.

Cla. Ha! What you mean the pretty girl. True: after you were gone, we went to a house together.

Av. I know you did.

Cla. And to a house of ill fame.

Av. I know it.

Cla. Ay, to be sure, you know every thing!—And 'tis this very knowledge which you boast of that has brought me to you this morning, to ask your assistance.

Av. I will serve you in any thing that is honourable.

Cla. 'Sdeath, sir! do you think I would require of you any thing else?

Av. You are out of humour—displeased, uneasy.—What's the matter?

Cla. Why do you ask? Don't you know without my telling you?

Av. Perhaps I do.—But there are some things I must be told, before I hazard giving an affront by mentioning them.

Cla. Why, this is, to be sure, an affair of some delicacy; and pardon me, if in what I am going to say, I am guilty of a breach of delicacy towards you.—I suspect you are mending a broken fortune, by being the spy of some great man, or some foreign power; but, be this as it will, you certainly do possess yourself of most excellent intelligence concerning others,—as I am a proof. Now, whether this knowledge comes by natural or supernatural means, that I will not dispute with you,—it shall be as you choose: only have the friendship to take some little trouble, either through your human or your infernal agents, to find for me something I have lost.

Av. And what is the thing which you are so earnest to recover?

Cla. It is a person.

Av. A person!—And who is he?

Cla. It is not *he*; it is *she*.

Av. And who is she? (*Roughly.*)

Cla. Whenever an old man talks of *she*, how cross he speaks! In short, it is the girl you saw with me last night.

Av. (*With contempt.*) And would you employ my art to recover her?

Cla. Sooner than any thing in the world.

Av. A pretty girl is easy to be found, without the art of conjuration.

Cla. But what is another man's taste may not be mine; and her you saw with me last night I would give twenty thousand pounds you could see with me again to night.

Av. Without applying to me, a slender part of

that sum, I should conceive, would fulfil your wishes.

Cla. No!—she is virtuous, and not to be purchased.

Av. And do you pretend that the girl who accompanied you to such a house as you have mentioned——

Cla. In that she was deceived. She thought I was going to take her to her parent's house. And, oh! what aggravates my grief, my remorse, her father was *my* father's friend—a man of the strictest honour, who lost his fortune in our house—His name is Metland.—This I only learnt an hour ago from the servants of Lady Mary Diamond. The daughter, from motives of prudence, had concealed from me the name of her family.

Av. And instead of taking her to this honoured parent's house, you took her to one devoted to purposes vile as your own.

Cla. From whence, insulted by my passion, she found means to escape, while I left her for a few moments to the care of one of the family.

Av. And do you wish to pursue her to her present asylum?

Cla. What asylum?—I have sent spies to her father's, and have been myself at the lady's with whom she lived. She has returned to neither place—and where, in the midst of a cold stormy night, she could shelter——

Av. No matter where, since she was sheltered from you.

Cla. The moment I found she had escaped me, I put pistols in my pocket, and, like a madman, ran half the town over, resolute to regain her. My emissaries have been through the other half.—In vain all our efforts to find her. And now, despairing, I am come to you—You, who can search the

grave, and bring forth the dead, cannot you discover the abode of the living?

Av. No! for my art is harmless.—The dead are beyond your power to injure;—the living you would destroy.

Cla. I waste my time in talking to you.

Av. Still 'tis but wasted.—Your time would, probably, be worse spent in occupation.

Cla. Ava Thoanoa, in what have I offended you, that you persist in your malignity towards me?—As my father's friend, I received you kindly, bore all your reproaches with patience, and from my heart forgave you;—nay, for that venerable face and solemn accent, I half believed the falsities you uttered.

Av. Falsities!

Cla. Submit to the reproach, or raise me spectres. This is the very time.—My feelings are so painful, I want them expelled by others still more acute. And if you have any arts to play, any tricks to show, begin instantly. I'm in a humour to fear nothing.

Av. This is not a humour for me to act upon. You must be prepared, properly prepared by calmness and reflection, before your sensual eyes can behold an airy form—a departed spirit.

Cla. Why, then, I have an appointment within an hour that will better than any thing else prepare me; for it is at one of the most retired and pious houses in town, where nothing is seen but the purest manners.

Av. And what could induce you to visit at such a house?

Cla. A pretty girl.

Av. Another pretty girl?

Cla. Oh yes—I have a thousand—but they are none of them to compare with her I have lost;—and yet they must be my relief from the poignant sense of my misfortune. And so, when I have been at

the Quaker's, and composed myself, I'll come back to you—And you engage to show me what you have promised?

Au. I do.

Cla. I thank you. Any amusement, my dear Ava, to keep me from reflection. [*Exit.*

Aa. No! rather will I bring you to reflection. [*Exit, on the opposite side.*

SCENE II.

The House of TIMOTHY STARCH.

Enter RUTH *and* ENSIGN METLAND.

En. At length I have watched your father and mother from the house. And now, Ruth, answer me—Is the report true of their intention to marry you to Mr Claransforth?

Ru. It is their intention, but not my will.

En. Can you then contemn all the riches of Claransforth, and prepare to take a long journey, one that will last for life, in company with a poor man? Will you not be peevish, and lament, when the roads are bad, and the ups and downs of marriage cares jolt and jostle you?

Ru. Not if they cast me against the man I love; for I would cleave unto him for support; yea, verily, I would—and think hills and dales more pleasant with him, than a smooth beaten way with any other.

En. Hark! I hear some one coming.—Perhaps your father! Let me retire into this room. [*Exit.*

Enter CLARANSFORTH *on the opposite side.*

Cla. Beloved Ruth! I am not in spirits; but your charms will revive me.

Ru. Neighbour Claransforth, I am in spirits; but your presence will depress them.

Cla. My dear, enchanting, prim Ruth, where is your mother? where is your father? I hope they are well! Where are they? (*Presses her hand.*)

Ru. I wish they were here, that they might reprove thee for thy impertinence.

Cla. Impertinence! Why, that's my love, my adoration of you.

Ru. Why dost thou come to me, neighbour, to make professions of thy affection? For thou dost not love me, I can perceive by thy vacant eye, thy absent thought, and careless manners. Verily, these are no arguments of the lover.

Cla. "Verily," what maketh thee such a connoisseur in judging of love.

Ru. That which maketh a connoisseur in all the arts,—practice.

Cla. Indeed!

Ru. Yea, friend. Verily, from the first dawn of my understanding, I have had an ear for music, an eye for painting, a taste for poetry, and a heart for love.

Cla. I rejoice to hear it.

Ru. But not to love thee, friend.

Cla. Whether me or not, the picture of yourself, which you have drawn, is so enchanting, it animates me to vow upon your lips—

(*As he is going to salute her*—)

Enter RACHEL STARCH.

Ra. Neighbour Claransforth, neighbour Claransforth, is this neighbourly, thus to assail my daughter?

Cla. Friend Starch, friend Starch, is this friendly, thus to come unwarily upon me?

Ra. Dost thou mean to make my daughter thy spouse? Say, instantly, yea or nay.

Cla. Nay.

Ra. And dost thou mean, after thus dallying, to forsake her?

Cla. Yea.

Ra. Surely thou can'st not leave a maiden, whose grief at thy perfidy will continue all the days of her life. She loves thee, Edward Claransforth, and has sacrificed to thee her hopes of marriage with a man of fortune. Who is now to become her support? For her parents are poor, and can give her no portion.

Cla. 'Sdeath! (*Aside, and moved.*)

Ra. Would'st thou destroy all the prospects of an innocent woman?

Cla. No, faith, I would not! I might, perhaps, love to do a little mischief; but not a great deal, upon my honour, without thirsting to make atonement. I have plunged in misery one young woman —a repetition of the crime would be execrable. (*Aside.*) Neighbour Starch, if I have, by any incoherent expressions, misled your daughter into an error, which has lost her the prospect of marrying a wealthy man, I will make all the atonement in my power, by giving her a fortune with any other whom she may choose. And I here pledge my word, that when you call upon me——

Enter ENSIGN METLAND.

En. Hold, sir! make no rash promises. That young woman has suffered no disappointment on your account; but she is constrained to silence. Nor had she ever a man of fortune for her suitor. I am her only lover; and I am not worth a guinea. Ruth! do you love this gentleman?

Ru. (*Warmly.*) No.

En. Whom do you love?

Ru. Thee.

Cla. Sir, you ennoble poverty. I am most extremely obliged to you for the information you have given me; and I entreat you will favour me with your address.

En. Pardon me—I wish the present meeting and conversation to be, from this day, forgotten; particularly the part I have taken in it. This prejudiced woman will, I hope, soon perceive her mistake; and that young woman will, I hope, soon be happily married. [*Exit.*

Cla. But, sir—(*calls after the Ensign—then turns to Rachel*)—Grant me the only favour I shall ever ask of you—Tell me the name of that gentleman.

Ra. He hath offended me, and I will not. Follow me, Ruth Starch.

[*Exit* RACHEL—RUTH *following.*

Cla. He mentioned his poverty: and if it were in my power to supply his wants——

Enter TIMOTHY STARCH.

Tim. I met the military man now coming forth from this house? What means he by still visiting—

Cla. I forget that young officer's name—Pray, can you tell it me?

Tim. Dost thou mean the Ensign Metland, whom I now passed at my door?

Cla. (*Starting.*) Metland! Metland!

Tim. Yea; son to old Metland, who lately failed in trade, and now lives in a cottage in the City-Road.

Cla. Is he his son? (*Aside.*) Oh! Oh! I had rather any one than him. (*To Timothy.*) Are you sure, certain, he is a son of Metland's?

Tim. Certain! Metland has but one son, and one daughter.

Cla. (*Anxiously.*) And where is she?

Tim. That is not at the present time known. The damsel hath fled from one Mary Diamond, with whom she lived, and has gone away with some vile man, who frequented that great and wicked house.

Cla. Heavens! (*Aside.*) And, pray, when did you hear this strange account?

Tim. But now—at my own door.

Cla. The brother did not seem acquainted with the news.

Tim. He knew it not till this instant—when his weeping mother met him, and, in my hearing, requested him to go in search of his sister, and bring her home to her bosom, whether sullied by the embraces of a seducer, or folded in the arms of death.

Cla. Oh, dreadful! And the mother lamenting in the streets!

Tim. Yea; it would have made thee weep to have listened to her lamentation. For my part, I seldom cry—and as seldom laugh. I keep my passions cool and steady, as I keep my countenance.—What is the matter with thine?

Cla. Quaker, I am a murderer. If the daughter of Metland be dead, as her mother apprehends, it is I who have caused her dissolution. It is I who seduced her from her home, and have been her murderer. Where shall I hide myself from the load that oppresses me?

Tim. Neighbour, thou must not hide thyself in my house. Why tarriest thou? Depart!

Cla. (*Inattentive to Timothy.*) Yes; I'll add suicide to murder, and end my remorse at once.

Tim. (*Going calmly up to him.*) And where would'st thou be buried, friend? Before thou committest the rash act, to whom dost thou bequeath the vast sums of which thou art possessed? Whom dost thou appoint thy pall-bearers? and what kind

of tomb-stone would'st thou have erected to thy memory?

Cla. Your iron heart brings me to myself. While there is a hope my Ellen lives, I will live for her. Quaker, farewell! and, notwithstanding all the agony I at this moment endure, I would not exchange my sensibility for your indifference. [*Exit.*

Tim. Verily, he speaketh foolishness. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

An apartment at LADY MARY'S.

Enter LADY MARY, *followed by* ELLEN.

El. If I have ever been a trusty servant—if, during the whole time I have lived in your house, this is my first offence—if I have always paid attention to your orders, and shown tenderness when sickness took from you the power of command—if, till a fatal passion seized my heart, my duty to you was as strictly fulfilled as that to my parents—if, repentance for my past fault, and promise of amendment, can make any atonement—oh! receive me again, and hide my failings from my father's knowledge!

L. Ma. Failings indeed! A pretty soft term for robbing your mistress, and passing the night with a professed libertine.

El. I did not. I passed it under a shed, in sight of my father's door, where I dared not rap. See—my clothes have been drenched with rain, and my hair is still damp.

L. Ma. And so your lover turned you out?

El. No; he did not turn me out; he meant to keep me secure—but I escaped.

L. Ma. Then return to him again; for, be assured, no one else will receive you.

El. No; there is my last night's habitation still left, and I will return there. (*Loitering.*) Yet, madam, though you refuse to trust me again yourself, you may not wholly despair that, in another service, I may give proof of contrition, and retrieve my character. You will, then, perhaps, be so compassionate as not to reveal my indiscretions; particularly not to complain of them to my family; but suffer me, as I am now weak with fatigue and sorrow, to go home, as discharged by you this morning on account of sickness.

L. Ma. A mighty pretty plan, and a very proper contriver you are, for the embellishment of a falsehood! Would you have me impose you on your father and mother as innocent? No! So far am I from such imposition, that, at midnight, when I found you did not come home, I went to them, to let them know you were gone off with a gentleman.

El. Oh!

L. Ma. You may well sigh and mourn!—If you had seen your poor mother—and if you had heard your father—he vowed never to pardon you—and said, "Were you ever to come into his presence—"

El. I never dare.

L. Ma. And your poor mother!—She——

El. Oh! tell me what my father said! I can bear his anger, his threats; I can bear that they be

put in execution—I can bear all—all things, but my mother's tears.

L. Ma. And you will not have them to bear long, if I may judge by her present grief.

El. Madam, I take my leave—gladly go—for the piercing winds, storms of hail and thunder, or the hooting of the rabble to a discarded wanderer, would not be half so wounding to my ears as your piercing words! (*Exit Lady Mary.*) Shall I follow, and kneel to her? No! her heart is hard—every heart is hardened to me—and I, who never in my life did wrong to another, am myself loaded with injuries—that will drive me to distraction! [*Exit.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

An apartment at CLARANSFORTH'S.

CLARANSFORTH *discovered, leaning disconsolately on a sopha.*

Enter BANKWELL, *and goes slowly to him.*

Ba. I am sorry to see you so out of spirits. Surely something very particular!

Cla. Yes, it is.

Ba. Lost a great sum, perhaps?

Cla. I wish I had.

Ba. I am glad you have not.

Cla. Sir, you know nothing of my concerns beyond the counting-house; nor will I suffer you to be a spy.

Ba. I beg your pardon. I did not come as a spy upon your sorrows. I come merely to deliver a message. A person, who is waiting below, requests a few minute's conversation with you.

Cla. Not now. I can see no one at present.

Ba. I was afraid so—And I would not have asked at this time for any one, except the person in question. But I was sorry to give the old man the trouble of coming again.

Cla. Oh, if it's the old Indian, you may admit him.

Ba. No, sir—it is old Mr Metland.

Cla. (*Starts.*) He! Old Metland. (*Fearfully.*) What does he want?

Ba. That he wishes to tell *you.*

Cla. No, I can't see him. I won't see him. I am ashamed to see him. (*Aside.*) Ashamed to see a man! Then am I degraded beneath one. I will have courage, and endure his reproaches.

Ba. Did you give me an answer, sir?

Cla. (*Affecting indifference.*) Yes—desire Mr Metland to walk in. Show him in.

While BANKWELL *goes out,* CLARANSFORTH *shows marks of extreme embarrassment and confusion.*

BANKWELL *re-enters, with* METLAND, *and retires immediately.*

METLAND *bows humbly to* CLARANSFORTH. CLARANSFORTH'S *confusion increases.*

Cla. Mr Metland; you do me much——Will you please to sit?

Me. No, I thank you, sir. The business on which I come will soon be over. I do not mean to detain you, sir, more than a few minutes; therefore I will proceed without ceremony. (*Takes from his pocket the notes, just as they were found in the private drawer, and lays them on the table which is standing before them.*) This money is yours.

Cla. Mine! (*Surprised.*) You to me,—money!

Me. You may, perhaps, have heard, that, on the day your father died, I brought him a sum of money which could not be found.

Cla. I heard so, with concern.

Me. After the fatal accident, which, at that time, we had to lament, I received, as a keep-sake, in memory of my friend, your father's writing-desk.—Your clerk, Bankwell, remembers the circumstance.

Cla. Probably.

Me. In this writing-desk, a secret drawer was, yesterday, by mere chance, discovered. It contained twelve thousand pounds, which, conformable to my conscience, I deliver up to you.

Cla. To me! Mr Metland! to me! Why to me?

Me. Because the writing-desk belonged to you; and because your trustees and executors, when they gave it me, were unacquainted with the treasure it contained.

Cla. Twelve thousand pounds. Is not that the amount of the sum which you entrusted to my father?

Me. Exactly.

Cla. It must then, of course, be your own money.

Me. Mr Claransforth, I know it to be my own;—and yet the manner in which I recovered it imposed a restraint upon my duty, not to consider it such, till you had acknowledged it mine.

Cla. (*aside.*) Good heaven! what a family have I wronged. Dear sir, hesitate not a moment to take it back! (*returning the money.*)

Me. You are then convinced, upon the word of an honest man, that this is my property.

Cla. I am convinced, I could not think otherwise.

Me. (*putting the notes up.*) I thank you!

Cla. And be assured, Mr Metland, that I rejoice, and am more happy at this event than if I had saved my most valuable ships from wreck.

Me. I see my old friend is still alive. Once more I sincerely thank you, dear sir, for your generosity, although I am not, from some family afflictions, exactly in the state to enjoy it.

Cla. (*trembling.*) What afflictions! may I venture to ask?

Me. Ah! you are a young man, and an unmarried man!—You have never yet experienced either the joys or sorrows of a husband and father.

(*Struggling to conceal his tears.*)

Cla. But I can sympathise.

Me. No doubt you can. But sympathy to one, like me, cast down—wounded in the tenderest part. But I beg your pardon, I have no right to trouble you with my griefs. Yet they will, at times burst forth, in defiance of resistance, in defiance of good manners.—And now they have almost made me forget part of my errand.—Here is a letter, sir, I found in the secret drawer of which I have been speaking. It is your father's hand-writing, and addressed to you. (*Gives it, and is going.*)

Cla. A letter in my father's own hand! It may relate to the money you have brought. Stay, and hear me read it.

Me. If it's your pleasure.

Cla. With reverence I break the honoured seal, and will faithfully perform whatever he has commanded. (*Reads.*) "My dearest son, this letter "you will not receive till you have lost your father, "and I write to point out to you where to choose

"another. Metland the elder has been my friend "for many years. I wish him to be yours by the tie "of relationship:—His daughter, in every endow- "ment, resembles your deceased mother. I was "happy in the marriage state—That you may be so, "I recommend to you Ellen Metland for a wife. (*He "shows great emotion.*) Accept of this my last ad- "vice, as you wish me peace in my grave. With "the hope that you will, I give my blessing to you "both.

"Edward Claransforth."

(*After reading the letter,* METLAND *and* CLARANSFORTH *stand for some time fixed and silent.*)

Me. (*after an effort.*) Mr Claransforth, you see before you a poor old father, sunk to the earth with shame, disappointment, and sorrow. When your beneficent parent wrote that letter, I had a daughter—now I have none. (*Bursting into a fit of tears.*) For she has abandoned me and her mother, abandoned herself! Oh! good young man! (*taking him by the hand.*) she is unworthy of *you.* A villain has seduced her, has destroyed that virtuous being who was the pride of her parents, and might have been the happiness of a husband.

Cla. He! that villain! falls on his knees before you, and entreats for mercy.——Metland, I saw your daughter, and, not knowing her to be yours, by my arts seduced her from her friends; but in vain all my attempts to allure her from virtue.—Wherever she is, she is pure as her guardian angel. She fled my caresses—And, on the oath of a repentant libertine, she is virtuous.

Me. Audacious profligate! But tell me where she is, that I may fly.—Where is my child?

Enter Ava Thoanoa.

Av. Thy child lies on a sick bed, attended by physicians, who despair of restoring her to health, so powerfully has affliction visited both mind and body.

Me. And yet I trust she will not die! Heaven is all merciful, and will preserve mine and my poor wife's senses! What friend to me has opened his door to a hapless wanderer.

Av. I, in my pursuit of the afflicted, I met her in a state of sorrow, bordering on distraction, and had her instantly conveyed to my apartments.—This is the address where you will find her. (*Gives a card.*) Keep it private, except to your own family.

Me. Bless you, kind sir, the way is short, and yet it will seem tedious. (*Going.*)

Cla. (who had thrown himself distractedly on a sofa during the last speech.) Metland! do not leave me without your forgiveness!

Me. Villain! dread an injured father's wrath!

[*Exit.*

Cla. (to Av.) Read that letter—You know the hand. In aggravation of my guilt, it is my wife, the wife to whom my father secretly betrothed me, that I have thrown an outcast on the world. Indian, I believe you—I now firmly believe all you have told me! My father's spirit cannot rest while his last will is directly violated, and I have the curses of those pious parents whom he hoped would bless me. I am this instant at the crisis of my fate; and, if thou hast spoken truth, precipitate me at once to better or worse, by showing me my father.

Av. (*after a pause.*) You are unworthy of the promise I made you; but my word has more weight with me than your offences. Follow me to my lodgings.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The lodgings of AVA THOANOA.

(*Enter two* SERVANTS, *meeting. One with lights, which he puts down.*)

1*st Ser.* Is my master returned?

2*d Ser.* No; but I expect him every moment, and I hope he will come soon, for we have had such a number of cards and visitors. (*Putting cards on the table. A rap at the door.*)

Enter AVA *and* CLARANSFORTH.

Av. Who have called since I have been abroad?

(*Servants whisper him, and exeunt.*)

Your masculine vice is joined to feminine weakness: You have prated of the art which I communicated to you, as a secret, and every gossip and adventurer in town apply to me, as a conjurer, to resolve their questions.

Cla. I own I mentioned your pretended art at Lady Mary Diamond's, and, I believe, at the house of one Starch, a Quaker. But I would have been secret, had you enjoined secrecy.

Av. Truth requires none. But here's Lady Mary Diamond, and two or three more, my servants in-

form me, shut up in separate rooms, till I have done with you: they do not seek truth, but falsehood.

Cla. But come, before you undeceive them, satisfy my curiosity.

Av. Are you prepared! (*solemnly.*) Do you think your courage will not fail you at the sight of your father?

Cla. I should sink to the earth were I to behold him: But confident that I shall not, I defy both him and you.

Av. Then to the trial. Stand firmly, and keep your eye fixed on that entrance—that door.

Cla. Very well, I do.

Av. Would you see him alone, or shall I stay with you?

Cla. Alone!

Av. I'll send him to you, then, immediately.

Cla. No, hold! you shall stay by me. I'll have no imposition. You shall not go, and move a puppet from behind a curtain. Stay by me, and call him to come forth.

Av. I must repeat the words of the charm in private: then I'll return, and he shall follow me.

[*Exit.*

Cla. How powerful is the effect of imagination!—The harassed state of my mind—my remorse—might—and, above all, the venerable aspect of this man, and the solemn language of his fictions, put me in a tremor.

Enter a person, who, in appearance, exactly represents AVA THOANOA.

Cla. Well!

The supposed AVA *holds up his hand to enjoin silence: then turns towards the door, on which he and* CLARANSFORTH *fix their eyes, with an anxious watchfulness, when* CLARANSFORTH (*the father*) *enters*

slow and stately. The younger CLARANSFORTH *appears amazed and shocked. The elder* CLARANSFORTH *stands fixed.*

Cla. the Younger. (*after a pause.*) It is the exact figure of my father—Exact—and almost makes me tremble. Admirable deception !—surprising ingenuity !—wonderful art!—Detain him—don't let him disappear—let me survey him nearer first. (*Claransforth the elder walks forward.*) Excellent piece of mechanism! I could even talk or kneel to that form!—'Tis most surprising! and childish prejudices will cling about me. Yet, that you are not a ghost, I am certain.—But what, in the name of wonder, are you?——

Cla. the Elder. I am he whom you mistook for Ava, the Indian.

Cla. the Younger. Ah ! my good friend Ava, himself, in the shape of my father. Then, what is this figure? He must be a ghost for certain?—(*Goes up to the person who represents* AVA. *This person takes off his beard, &c. and discovers himself to be* BANKWELL.) Bankwell engaged in a trick upon me ! Then I see, I understand it all. That is not the Indian in my father's form. It was my father who put on the Indian's ; my living father, who but feigned to die, that he might have the means to search into all the frailties of his son.

Cla. the Elder. Your conjecture is right, and he will punish those frailties. For, do not think, because I have descended to practise an idle deception on you, that I mean to fool on. This trifling was but to fulfil the promise I was provoked to make by your sceptic discourse. (*Cla. the Younger falls on his knees.*) No, sir, no pardon from me—

(*Enter* METLAND *and* ENSIGN METLAND.)

till you have received it here.

Me. I am in astonishment.—Is it possible? Do I behold Claransforth, my former friend?

Cla. the Elder. Say your *present* friend—more firmly yours than ever.

Me. Amazement!

Cla. the Elder. My friend, I have watched you and your family, through all your sorrows, all your meritorious conduct, beneath the wrong I did you, and which it shall be now my happiness to repair. I have watched all those, too, whom I equally loved; and I have found the far greater number, such as make this world more dear, than when, in the midst of my house, in flames, my danger brought to my recollection a secret passage by which I preserved my life, yet preserved it with such hazard, that you all thought me dead. This gave, to my curious and suspicious nature, an opportunity which I could not resist. Bankwell alone has been my confidant; by his means, I have been enabled to prove all your hearts; and, I rejoice to say that, except in one instance, I have been delighted by the experiment.

Cla. the Younger. I am the exception.

Cla. the Elder. You are.

Cla. the Younger. And, yet, how I have sinned against my duty to my father is, to myself, unknown; for the inmost recesses of my heart cannot reproach me with the want of filial love.

Cla. the Elder. You have sinned against heaven and your neighbour. I take those injuries on myself.

Cla. the Younger. But heaven is merciful. So sometimes is man. (*Enter* ELLEN, *leaning on her* MOTHER.) Ellen, would'st thou forgive me?

Cla. the Elder. Dar'st thou ask it?

Cla. the Younger. Is there any other way to obtain forgiveness? If you will instruct me in any other, whatever is the penalty, I will submit to it.

Cla. the Elder. Metland! my friend—can you ever look on this man as your son?

Me. I can look on him as *yours*, and, as such, forgive h'm.

Cla. the Elder. But the rest of your family.

Mrs. Me. I love, by my husband's example.

En. And I will regard him by my sister's.

Cla. the Elder. Young woman, whom I have retrieved from desperation, and whom, from your childhood, I have loved as my own, do not deceive me. Can you forgive this man? Can you be thoroughly reconciled to him? Could you take him for a husband?

CLARANSFORTH *the younger goes to her, and kneels.*

El. While heaven remits its punishment on my offence, can I be rigorous to others?

Cla. the Younger. I will deserve the confidence you place in me. I will deserve to be related to this family, whose virtues I have proved.

Cla. the Elder. And now take my hand. For while you retain all your virtuous dispositions, and will banish all your vicious ones——

Enter RUTH STARCH.

Ru. Doth one Ava Thoanoa abide in this house?

En. Ruth! What can bring you here?

Ru. I came to ask the fortune-teller, if I should ever be thy wife?

Enter RACHEL *and* TIMOTHY STARCH.

Ra. Timothy! It is as I have said unto thee; here is the soldier and thy daughter in close communication.

Ru. Mother, I came not here to see the soldier, but to hear tidings of him from the sorcerer, who keepeth the house.

Ra. A sorcerer! Woe be unto him! Which is he?

Cla. the Elder. If I may assume the mystery of fortune-telling, this young man and woman (*pointing to the* ENSIGN *and* RUTH,) would be happy in marriage, if they could gain their friends' consent.

Me. Whatever will render my son happy, I shall not oppose.

Cla. the Elder. My neighbour Starch, what say you?

Tim. Neighbour Claransforth, they told me thou wert dead! but thou art not, I find.

Cla. the Elder. I am permitted to revisit this world, to dispose of my riches worthily; and I mean to give this young Ensign a fortune, in addition to that which his father will give him.

Tim. But, Ruth, what say'st thou to this man?

Ru. Verily, I should like to become unto this man such as my mother became unto thee.

Tim. Then, take her, young man. But I say unto thee, love her only with that discreet love with which I have loved her mother, and which made me content to marry her, and would have made me equally content if I had not.

Ra. And, verily, this is the sort of prudent love which I bear unto thee.

Cla. the Elder. What various manners and passions have I witnessed since my disguise gave me the power of judgment on the failings of my neighbours! I now, in my turn, am to be judged; and, in order to support the title of a Wise Man, I most humbly submit my character to the approbation or censure, of—Wiser Heads than my own.

PERCY,

A

TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

BY

HANNAH MORE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PERCY, *Earl of Northumberland,*	*Mr Lewis.*
EARL DOUGLAS,	*Mr Wroughton.*
EARL RABY, *Elwina's Father,*	*Mr Aickin.*
EDRIC, *Friend to Douglas,*	*Mr Whitefield.*
HARCOURT, *Friend to Percy,*	*Mr Robson.*
SIR HUBERT, *a Knight,*	*Mr Hull.*
ELWINA,	*Mrs Barry.*
BIRTHA,	*Mrs Jackson.*

Knights, Guards, Attendants, &c.

SCENE,—Raby Castle, in Durham.

PERCY.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Gothic Hall.

Enter EDRIC *and* BIRTHA.

Bir. What may this mean? Earl Douglas has injoin'd thee
To meet him here in private?
Ed. Yes, my sister,
And this injunction I have oft received;
But when he comes, big with some painful secret,
He starts, looks wild, then drops ambiguous hints,
Frowns, hesitates, turns pale, and says 'twas nothing;
Then feigns to smile, and by his anxious care

To prove himself at ease, betrays his pain.
Bir. Since my short sojourn here, I've mark'd this earl,
And though the ties of blood unite us closely,
I shudder at his haughtiness of temper,
Which not his gentle wife, the bright Elwina,
Can charm to rest. Ill are their spirits pair'd;
His is the seat of frenzy, her's of softness,
His love is transport, her's is trembling duty,
Rage in his soul is as the whirlwind fierce,
While her's ne'er felt the power of that rude passion.
Ed. Perhaps the mighty soul of Douglas mourns,
Because inglorious love detains him here,
While our bold knights, beneath the Christian standard,
Press to the bulwarks of Jerusalem.
Bir. Though every various charm adorns Elwina,
And though the noble Douglas dotes to madness,
Yet some dark mystery involves their fate:
The canker grief devours Elwina's bloom,
And on her brow meek resignation sits,
Hopeless, yet uncomplaining.
Ed. 'Tis most strange.
Bir. Once, not long since, she thought herself alone;
'Twas then the pent-up anguish burst its bounds;
With broken voice, clasp'd hands, and streaming eyes,
She call'd upon her father, call'd him cruel,
And said her duty claim'd far other recompence.
Ed. Perhaps the absence of the good Lord Raby,
Who, at her nuptials, quitted this fair castle,
Resigning it to her, may thus afflict her.
Hast thou e'er question'd her, good Birtha?
Bir. Often,
But hitherto in vain; and yet she shews me
The endearing kindness of a sister's love;
But if I speak of Douglas——

Ed. See! he comes.
It wou'd offend him shou'd he find you here.

Enter DOUGLAS.

Dou. How! Edric and his sister in close conference?
Do they not seem alarm'd at my approach?
And see, how suddenly they part! Now Edric,
[*Exit* BIRTHA.
Was this well done? or was it like a friend,
When I desired to meet thee here alone,
With all the warmth of trusting confidence,
To lay my bosom naked to thy view,
And shew thee all its weakness, was it well
To call thy sister here, to let her witness
Thy friend's infirmity?—perhaps to tell her—

Ed. My lord, I nothing know; I came to learn.

Dou. Nay then thou dost suspect there's something wrong?

Ed. If we were bred from infancy together,
If I partook in all thy youthful griefs,
And every joy thou knew'st was doubly mine,
Then tell me all the secret of thy soul:
Or have these few short months of separation,
The only absence we have ever known,
Have these so rent the bands of love asunder,
That Douglas should distrust his Edric's truth?

Dou. My friend, I know thee faithful as thou'rt brave,
And I will trust thee—but not now, good Edric,
'Tis past, 'tis gone, it is not worth the telling,
'Twas wrong to cherish what disturb'd my peace;
I'll think of it no more.

Ed. Transporting news!
I fear'd some hidden trouble vex'd your quiet.
In secret I have watch'd——

Dou. Ha! watch'd in secret?
A spy, employ'd, perhaps, to note my actions.

What have I said? Forgive me, thou art noble:
Yet do not press me to disclose my grief,
For when thou know'st it, I perhaps shall hate thee
As much, my Edric, as I hate myself
For my suspicions—I am ill at ease.

Ed. How will the fair Elwina grieve to hear it!

Dou. Hold, Edric, hold—thou hast touch'd the fatal string
That wakes me into madness. Hear me then,
But let the deadly secret be secured
With bars of adamant in thy close breast.
Think on the curse which waits on broken oaths;
A knight is bound by more than vulgar ties,
And perjury in thee were doubly damn'd.
Well then, the king of England—

Ed. Is expected
From distant Palestine.

Dou. Forbid it, Heaven!
For with him comes—

Ed. Ah! who?

Dou. Peace, peace,
For see Elwina's here. Retire, my Edric;
When next we meet thou shalt know all. Farewell.

[*Exit* EDRIC.

Now to conceal with care my bosom's anguish,
And let her beauty chase away my sorrows!
Yes, I wou'd meet her with a face of smiles—
But 'twill not be.

Enter ELWINA.

El. Alas, 'tis ever thus!
Thus ever clouded is his angry brow. [*Aside.*

Dou. I were too blest, Elwina, cou'd I hope
You met me here by choice, or that your bosom
Shared the warm transports mine must ever feel
At your approach.

El. My lord, if I intrude,

The cause which brings me claims at least forgiveness:
I fear you are not well, and come, unbidden,
Except by faithful duty, to inquire,
If haply in my power, my little power,
I have the means to minister relief
To your affliction?

Dou. What unwonted goodness!
O I were blest above the lot of man,
If tenderness, not duty, brought Elwina;
Cold, ceremonious, and unfeeling duty,
That wretched substitute for love: but know,
The heart demands a heart; nor will be paid
With less than what it gives. E'en now, Elwina,
The glistening tear stands trembling in your eyes,
Which cast their mournful sweetness on the ground,
As if they fear'd to raise their beams to mine,
And read the language of reproachful love.

El. My lord, I hoped the thousand daily proofs
Of my obedience——

Dou. Death to all my hopes!
Heart-rending word! obedience? what's obedience?
'Tis fear, 'tis hate, 'tis terror, 'tis aversion,
'Tis the cold debt of ostentatious duty,
Paid with insulting caution, to remind me
How much you tremble to offend a tyrant
So terrible as Douglas.—O, Elwina——
While duty measures the regard it owes
With scrupulous precision and nice justice,
Love never reasons, but profusely gives,
Gives, like a thoughtless prodigal, its all,
And trembles then, lest it has done too little.

El. Indeed I'm most unhappy that my cares,
And my solicitude to please, offend.

Dou. True tenderness is less solicitous,
Less prudent and more fond; the enamour'd heart,
Conscious it loves, and blest in being loved,
Reposes on the object it adores,

And trusts the passion it inspires and feels.—
Thou hast not learnt how terrible it is
To feed a hopeless flame.—But hear, Elwina,
Thou most obdurate, hear me.—

El. Say, my lord,
For your own lips shall vindicate my fame,
Since at the altar I became your wife,
Can malice charge me with an act, a word,
I ought to blush at? Have I not still lived
As open to the eye of observation,
As fearless innocence should ever live?
I call attesting angels to be witness,
If in my open deed, or secret thought,
My conduct, or my heart, they've aught discern'd
Which did not emulate their purity.

Dou. This vindication ere you were accused,
This warm defence, repelling all attacks
Ere they are made, and construing casual words
To formal accusations, trust me, madam,
Shews rather an alarm'd and vigilant spirit,
For ever on the watch to guard its secret,
Than the sweet calm of fearless innocence.
Who talk'd of guilt? Who testified suspicion?

El. Learn, sir, that virtue, while 'tis free from blame,
Is modest, lowly, meek, and unassuming;
Not apt, like fearful vice, to shield its weakness
Beneath the studied pomp of boastful phrase,
Which swells to hide the poverty it shelters;
But when this virtue feels itself suspected,
Insulted, set at nought, its whiteness stain'd,
It then grows proud, forgets its humble worth,
And rates itself above its real value.

Dou. I did not mean to chide! but think, O think,
What pangs must rend this fearful doting heart,
To see you sink impatient of the grave,
To feel, distracting thought! to feel you hate me!

El. What if the slender thread by which I hold
This poor precarious being soon must break,
Is it Elwina's crime, or heaven's decree?
Yet I shall meet, I trust, the king of terrors,
Submissive and resign'd, without one pang,
One fond regret, at leaving this gay world.

Dou. Yes, madam, there is one, one man adored,
For whom your sighs will heave, your tears will flow,
For whom this hated world will still be dear,
For whom you still wou'd live——

El. Hold, hold, my lord,
What may this mean?

Dou. Ah! I have gone too far.
What have I said?—Your father, sure, your father,
The good Lord Raby, may at least expect
One tender sigh.

El. Alas, my lord! I thought
The precious incense of a daughter's sighs
Might rise to heaven, and not offend its ruler.

Dou. 'Tis true; yet Raby is no more beloved
Since he bestow'd his daughter's hand on Douglas;
That was a crime the dutiful Elwina
Can never pardon; and believe me, madam,
My love's so nice, so delicate my honour,
I am ashamed to owe my happiness
To ties which make you wretched. (*Exit* DOUGLAS.

El. Ah! how's this?
Though I have ever found him fierce and rash,
Full of obscure surmises and dark hints,
Till now he never ventured to accuse me.
Yet there is one, one man beloved, adored,
For whom your tears will flow—these were his words—
And then the wretched subterfuge of Raby—
How poor th' evasion!—But my Birtha comes.

Enter BIRTHA.

Bir. Crossing the portico I met Lord Douglas,

Disorder'd were his looks, his eyes shot fire;
He called upon your name with such distraction,
I fear'd some sudden evil had befallen you.

El. Not sudden; no; long has the storm been gathering,
Which threatens speedily to burst in ruin
On this devoted head.

Bir. I ne'er beheld
Your gentle soul so ruffled, yet I've mark'd you,
While others thought you happiest of the happy,
Blest with whate'er the world calls great, or good,
With all that nature, all that fortune gives,
I've mark'd you bending with a weight of sorrow.

El. O I will tell thee all! thou cou'dst not find
An hour, a moment in Elwina's life,
When her full heart so long'd to ease its burthen,
And pour its sorrows in thy friendly bosom:
Hear then, with pity hear my tale of woe,
And, O forgive, kind nature, filial piety,
If my presumptuous lips arraign a father!
Yes, Birtha, that beloved, that cruel father,
Has doom'd me to a life of hopeless anguish,
To die of grief ere half my days are number'd,
Doom'd me to give my trembling hand to Douglas,
'Twas all I had to give—my heart was—Percy's.

Bir. What do I hear?

El. My misery, not my crime.
Long since the battle 'twixt the rival houses
Of Douglas and of Percy, for whose hate
This mighty globe's too small a theatre,
One summer's morn my father chased the deer
On Cheviot Hills, Northumbria's fair domain.

Bir. On that famed spot where first the feuds commenced
Between the earls?

El. The same. During the chace,
Some of my father's knights received an insult
From the Lord Percy's herdsmen, churlish foresters,

Unworthy of the gentle blood they served.
My father, proud and jealous of his honour,
(Thou know'st the fiery temper of our barons,)
Swore that Northumberland had been concern'd
In this rude outrage, nor wou'd hear of peace,
Or reconcilement, which the Percy offer'd;
But bade me hate, renounce, and banish him.
O! 'twas a task too hard for all my duty,
I strove, and wept, I strove—but still I loved.

Bir. Indeed 'twas most unjust; but say what follow'd?

El. Why shou'd I dwell on the disastrous tale?
Forbid to see me, Percy soon embark'd
With our great king against the Saracen.
Soon as the jarring kingdoms were at peace,
Earl Douglas, whom till then I ne'er had seen,
Came to this castle; 'twas my hapless fate
To please him.—Birtha! thou can'st tell what follow'd:
But who shall tell the agonies I felt?
My barbarous father forced me to dissolve
The tender vows himself had bid me form——
He dragged me trembling, dying, to the altar,
I sigh'd, I struggled, fainted, and complied.

Bir. Did Douglas know a marriage had been once
Proposed 'twixt you and Percy?

El. If he did,
He thought, like you, it was a match of policy,
Nor knew our love surpass'd our fathers' prudence.

Bir. Should he now find he was the instrument
Of the Lord Raby's vengeance?

El. 'Twere most dreadful!
My father lock'd this motive in his breast,
And feign'd to have forgot the chace of Cheviot.
Some moons have now completed their slow course,
Since my sad marriage.—Percy still is absent.

Bir. Nor will return before his sov'reign comes.

El. Talk not of his return! this coward heart
Can know no thought of peace but in his absence.
How, Douglas here again? some fresh alarm!

Enter DOUGLAS, *agitated, with letters in his hand.*

Dou. Madam, your pardon—
El. What disturbs my lord?
Dou. Nothing.—Disturb! I ne'er was more at ease.
These letters from your father give us notice
He will be here to-night:—He further adds,
The king's each hour expected.
El. How? the king?
Said you the king?
Dou. And 'tis Lord Raby's pleasure
That you among the foremost bid him welcome.
You must attend the court.
El. Must I, my lord?
Dou. Now to observe how she receives the news! [*Aside.*
El. I must not,—cannot.—By the tender love
You have so oft profess'd for poor Elwina,
Indulge this one request—O let me stay!
Dou. Enchanting sounds! she does not wish to go— (*Aside.*
El. The bustling world, the pomp which waits on greatness,
Ill suits my humble, unambitious soul;—
Then leave me here, to tread the safer path
Of private life, here where my peaceful course
Shall be as silent as the shades around me;
Nor shall one vagrant wish be e'er allow'd
To stray beyond the bounds of Raby Castle.
Dou. O music to my ears! [*Aside.*]—Can you resolve
To hide those wond'rous beauties in the shade,
Which rival kings wou'd cheaply buy with empire?
Can you renounce the pleasures of a court,

Whose roofs resound with minstrelsy and mirth?
El. My lord, retirement is a wife's best duty,
And virtue's safest station is retreat.
Dou. My soul's in transports! (*Aside.*)—But can you forego
What wins the soul of woman——admiration?
A world, where charms inferior far to yours
Only presume to shine when you are absent?
Will you not long to meet the public gaze?
Long to eclipse the fair, and charm the brave?
El. These are delights in which the mind partakes not.
Dou. I'll try her farther. (*Aside.*)
(*Takes her hand, and looks stedfastly at her as he speaks.*)
But reflect once more:
When you shall hear that England's gallant peers,
Fresh from the fields of war, and gay with glory,
All vain with conquest, and elate with fame,
When you shall hear these princely youths contend,
In many a tournament for beauty's prize;
When you shall hear of revelry and masking,
Of mimic combats and of festive halls,
Of lances shiver'd in the cause of love,
Will you not then repent, then wish your fate,
Your happier fate, had till that hour reserved you
For some plumed conqueror?
El. My fate, my lord,
Is now bound up with yours.
Dou. Here let me kneel——
Yes, I will kneel, and gaze, and weep, and wonder;
Thou paragon of goodness!—pardon, pardon,
(*Kisses her hand.*
I am convinced—I can no longer doubt,
Nor talk, nor hear, nor reason, nor reflect.
—I must retire, and give a loose to joy.
(*Exit* DOUGLAS.
Bir. The king returns.

El. And with him Percy comes!
Bir. You needs must go.
El. Shall I solicit ruin,
And pull destruction on me ere its time?
I, who have held it criminal to name him?
I will not go——I disobey thee, Douglas,
But disobey thee to preserve thy honour. (*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

The Hall.

DOUGLAS, *speaking as he enters.*

See that the traitor instantly be seized,
And strictly watch'd: let none have access to him.—
O jealousy, thou aggregate of woes!
Were there no hell thy torments wou'd create one.
But yet she may be guiltless—may? she must.
How beautiful she look'd! pernicious beauty!
Yet innocent as bright seem'd the sweet blush
That mantled on her cheek. But not for me,
But not for me those breathing roses blow!

And then she wept—What! can I bear her tears?
Well—let her weep—her tears are for another;
O did they fall for me, to dry their streams
I'd drain the choicest blood that feeds this heart,
Nor think the drops I shed were half so precious.
(*He stands in a musing posture.*

Enter LORD RABY.

Ra. Sure I mistake—am I in Raby Castle?
Impossible! that was the seat of smiles;
And Cheerfulness and Joy were household gods.
I used to scatter pleasures when I came,
And every servant shared his lord's delight;
But now Suspicion and Distrust dwell here,
And Discontent maintains a sullen sway.
Where is the smile unfeign'd, the jovial welcome,
Which cheer'd the sad, beguiled the pilgrim's pain,
And made Dependency forget its bonds?
Where is the ancient, hospitable hall,
Whose vaulted roof once rung with harmless mirth,
Where every passing stranger was a guest,
And every guest a friend? I fear me much,
If once our nobles scorn their rural seats,
Their rural greatness, and their vassals' love,
Freedom and English grandeur are no more.

Dou. (*Advancing.*) My lord, you are welcome.

Ra. Sir, I trust I am;
But yet methinks I shall not feel I'm welcome
Till my Elwina bless me with her smiles:
She was not wont with ling'ring step to meet me,
Or greet my coming with a cold embrace;
Now, I extend my longing arms in vain;
My child, my darling, does not come to fill them.
O they were happy days when she wou'd fly
To meet me from the camp, or from the chace,
And with her fondness overpay my toils!
How eager wou'd her tender hands unbrace
The ponderous armour from my war-worn limbs,

And pluck the helmet which opposed her kiss!

Dou. O sweet delights, that never must be mine!

Ra. What do I hear?

Dou. Nothing: inquire no farther.

Ra. My lord, if you respect an old man's peace,
If e'er you doted on my much-loved child,
As 'tis most sure you made me think you did,
Then, by the pangs which you may one day feel,
When you, like me, shall be a fond, fond father,
And tremble for the treasure of your age,
Tell me what this alarming silence means?
You sigh, you do not speak, nay more, you hear not;
Your lab'ring soul turns inward on itself,
As there were nothing but your own sad thoughts
Deserved regard. Does my child live?

Dou. She does.

Ra. To bless her father!

Dou. And to curse her husband!

Ra. Ah! have a care, my lord, I'm not so old—

Dou. Nor I so base, that I should tamely bear it;
Nor am I so inured to infamy,
That I can say, without a burning blush,
She lives to be my curse!

Ra. How's this?

Dou. I thought
The lily opening to the heaven's soft dews,
Was not so fragrant, and was not so chaste.

Ra. Has she proved otherwise? I'll not believe it.
Who has traduced my sweet, my innocent child?
Yet she's too good to 'scape calumnious tongues.
I know that Slander loves a lofty mark:
It saw her soar a flight above her fellows,
And hurl'd its arrow to her glorious height,
To reach her heart, and bring her to the ground.

Dou. Had the rash tongue of Slander so presumed,
My vengeance had not been of that slow sort
To need a prompter; nor should any arm,
No, not a father's, dare dispute with mine,

The privilege to die in her defence.
None dares accuse Elwina, but—
Ra. But who?
Dou. But Douglas.
Ra. (*Puts his hand to his sword.*) You?—O spare my age's weakness!
You do not know what 'tis to be a father,
You do not know, or you would pity me;
The thousand tender throbs, the nameless feelings,
The dread to ask, and yet the wish to know,
When we adore and fear; but wherefore fear?
Does not the blood of Raby fill her veins?
Dou. Percy;—know'st thou that name?
Ra. How? what of Percy?
Dou. He loves Elwina, and, my curses on him!
He is beloved again.
Ra. I'm on the rack!
Dou. Not the two Theban brothers bore each other
Such deep, such deadly hate as I and Percy.
Ra. But tell me of my child.
Dou. (*Not minding him.*) As I and Percy!
When at the marriage rites, O rites accursed!
I seized her trembling hand, she started back,
Cold horror thrill'd her veins, her tears flow'd fast.
Fool that I was, I thought 'twas maiden fear;
Dull, doting ignorance! beneath those terrors
Hatred for me and love for Percy lurk'd.
Ra. What proof of guilt is this?
Dou. E'er since our marriage
Our days have still been cold and joyless all;
Painful restraint, and hatred ill disguised,
Her sole return for all my waste of fondness.
This very morn I told her 'twas your will
She should repair to court; with all those graces,
Which first subdued my soul, and still enslave it,
She begg'd to stay behind in Raby Castle,
For courts and cities had no charms for her.
Curse my blind love! I was again ensnared,
And doted on the sweetness which deceived me.

Just at the hour she thought I shou'd be absent,
(For chance cou'd ne'er have timed their guilt so well,)
Arrived young Harcourt, one of Percy's knights,
Strictly enjoin'd to speak to none but her;
I seized the miscreant; hitherto he's silent,
But tortures soon shall force him to confess!

Ra. Percy is absent—They have never met.

Dou. At what a feeble hold you grasp for succour!
Will it content me that her person's pure?
No, if her alien heart dotes on another,
She is unchaste, were not that other Percy.
Let vulgar spirits basely wait for proof,
She loves another—'tis enough for Douglas.

Ra. Be patient.

Dou. Be a tame convenient husband,
And meanly wait for circumstantial guilt?
No—I am nice as the first Cæsar was,
And start at bare suspicion. (*Going.*

Ra. (*Holding him.*) Douglas, hear me;
Thou hast named a Roman husband; if she's false,
I mean to prove myself a Roman father.

(*Exit* DOUGLAS.

This marriage was my work, and thus I'm punish'd!

Enter ELWINA.

El. Where is my father? let me fly to meet him,
O let me clasp his venerable knees,
And die of joy in his beloved embrace!

Ra. (*Avoiding her embrace.*) Elwina!

El. And is that all? so cold?

Ra. [*Sternly.*] Elwina!

El. Then I'm undone indeed! How stern his looks!
I will not be repulsed, I am your child,
The child of that dear mother you adored;
You shall not throw me off, I will grow here,
And, like the patriarch, wrestle for a blessing.

Ra. [*Holding her from him.*] Before I take thee in these aged arms,
Press thee with transport to this beating heart,

And give a loose to all a parent's fondnes
Answer, and see thou answer me as truly
As if the dread inquiry came from Heaven,—
Does no interior sense of guilt confound thee?
Canst thou lay all thy naked soul before me?
Can thy unconscious eye encounter mine?
Canst thou endure the probe, and never shrink?
Can thy firm hand meet mine and never tremble?
Art thou prepared to meet the rigid Judge?
Or to embrace the fond, the melting father?

El. Mysterious Heaven! to what am I reserved!

Ra. Shou'd some rash man, regardless of thy fame,
And in defiance of thy marriage vows,
Presume to plead a guilty passion for thee,
What wou'd'st thou do?

El. What honour bids me do.

Ra. Come to my arms! [*They embrace.*

El. My father!

Ra. Yes, Elwina,
Thou art my child—thy mother's perfect image.

El. Forgive these tears of mingled joy and doubt;
For why that question? who should seek to please
The desolate Elwina?

Ra. But if any
Should so presume, canst thou resolve to hate him,
Whate'er his name, whate'er his pride of blood,
Whate'er his former arrogant pretensions?

El. Ha!

Ra. Dost thou falter? Have a care, Elwina.

El. Sir, do not fear me; am I not your daughter?

Ra. Thou hast a higher claim upon thy honour;
Thou art Earl Douglas' wife.

El. [*Weeps.*] I am indeed!

Ra. Unhappy Douglas!

El. Has he then complain'd?
Has he presumed to sully my white fame?

Ra. He knows that Percy——

El. Was my destined husband;

By your own promise, by a father's promise,
And by a tie more strong, more sacred still,
Mine, by the fast firm bond of mutual love.

Ra. Now, by my fears, thy husband told me truth.

El. If he has told thee that thy only child
Was forced a helpless victim to the altar,
Torn from his arms who had her virgin heart,
And forced to make false vows to one she hated,
Then I confess that he has told thee truth.

Ra. Her words are barbed arrows in my heart.
But 'tis too late. (*Aside.*) Thou hast appointed Harcourt
To see thee here by stealth in Douglas' absence?

El. No, by my life, nor knew I till this moment
That Harcourt was return'd. Was it for this
I taught my heart to struggle with its feelings?
Was it for this I bore my wrongs in silence?
When the fond ties of early love were broken,
Did my weak soul break out in fond complaints?
Did I reproach thee? Did I call thee cruel?
No—I endured it all; and wearied Heaven
To bless the father who destroyed my peace.

Enter Messenger.

Mes. My lord, a knight, Sir Hubert as I think,
But newly landed from the holy wars,
Entreats admittance.

Ra. Let the warrior enter. (*Exit Messenger.*
All private interests sink at his approach;
All selfish cares be for a moment banish'd!
I've now no child, no kindred but my country.

El. Weak heart, be still, for what hast thou to fear?

Enter Sir Hubert.

Ra. Welcome, thou gallant knight! Sir Hubert, welcome!

Welcome to Raby Castle!—In one word,
Is the king safe? Is Palestine subdued?
Sir Hu. The king is safe, and Palestine subdued.
Ra. Blest be the God of armies! Now, Sir Hubert,
By all the saints thou'rt a right noble knight!
O why was I too old for this crusade!
I think it wou'd have made me young again,
Cou'd I, like thee, have seen the hated crescent
Yield to the Christian cross.—How now, Elwina!
What! cold at news which might awake the dead!
If there's a drop in thy degenerate veins
That glows not now, thou art not Raby's daughter.
It is religion's cause, the cause of Heaven!
El. When policy assumes religion's name,
And wears the sanctimonious garb of faith
Only to colour fraud, and license murder,
War then is tenfold guilt.
Ra. Blaspheming girl!
El. 'Tis not the crosier, nor the pontiff's robe,
The saintly look, nor elevated eye,
Nor Palestine destroy'd, nor Jordan's banks
Deluged with blood of slaughter'd infidels;
No, nor the extinction of the eastern world,
Nor all the mad, pernicious, bigot rage
Of your crusades, can bribe that Power who sees
The motive with the act. O blind to think
That cruel war can please the Prince of Peace!
He who erects his altar in the heart,
Abhors the sacrifice of human blood,
And all the false devotion of that zeal,
Which massacres the world he died to save.
Ra. O impious rage! If thou woud'st shun my curse,
No more, I charge thee.—Tell me, good Sir Hubert,
Say, have our arms atchieved this glorious deed,
(I fear to ask,) without much Christian bloodshed?
El. Now Heaven support me! [*Aside.*
Sir Hu. My good lord of Raby,

Imperfect is the sum of human glory!
Wou'd I could tell thee that the field was won,
Without the death of such illustrious knights
As make the high-flush'd cheek of Victory pale.
El. Why should I tremble thus? [*Aside.*
Ra. Who have we lost?
Sir Hu. The noble Clifford, Walsingham, and Grey,
Sir Harry Hastings, and the valiant Pembroke,
All men of choicest note.
Ra. O that my name
Had been enroll'd in such a list of heroes!
If I was too infirm to serve my country,
I might have proved my love by dying for her.
El. Were there no more?
Sir Hu. But few of noble blood.
But the brave youth who gain'd the palm of glory,
The flower of knighthood, and the plume of war,
Who bore his banner foremost in the field,
Yet conquer'd more by mercy than the sword,
Was Percy.
El. Then he lives! [*Aside.*
Ra. Did he? Did Percy?
O gallant boy, then I'm thy foe no more;
Who conquers for my country is my friend!
His fame shall add new glories to a house,
Where never maid was false, nor knight disloyal.
Sir Hu. You do embalm him, lady, with your tears:
They grace the grave of glory where he lies—
He died the death of honour.
El. Said'st thou—died?
Sir Hu. Beneath the towers of Solyma he fell.
El. Oh!
Sir Hu. Look to the lady.
[ELWINA *faints in her father's arms.*
Ra. Gentle knight, retire——
'Tis an infirmity of nature in her,
She ever mourns at any tale of blood;
She will be well anon—mean time, Sir Hubert,
You'll grace our castle with your friendly sojourn.

Sir Hu. I must return with speed—health to the lady. [*Exit* HUBERT.

Ra. Look up, Elwina. Shou'd her husband come! Yet she revives not.

Enter DOUGLAS.

Dou. Ha——Elwina fainting!
My lord, I fear you have too harshly chid her.
Her gentle nature could not brook your sternness.
She wakes, she stirs, she feels returning life.
My love! [*He takes her hand.*

El. O Percy!

Dou. [*Starts.*] Do my senses fail me?

El. My Percy, 'tis Elwina calls.

Dou Hell, hell!

Ra. Retire a while, my daughter.

El. Douglas here,
My father and my husband?—O for pity—
[*Exit* ELWINA, *casting a look of anguish on both.*)

Dou. Now, now confess she well deserves my vengeance!
Before my face to call upon my foe!

Ra. Upon a foe who has no power to hurt thee—
Earl Percy's slain.

Dou. I live again.—But hold—
Did she not weep? she did, and wept for Percy.
If she laments him, he's my rival still,
And not the grave can bury my resentment.

Ra. The truly brave are still the truly gen'rous;
Now, Douglas, is the time to prove thee both.
If it be true that she did once love Percy,
Thou hast no more to fear, since he is dead.
Release young Harcourt, let him see Elwina,
'Twill serve a double purpose, 'twill at once
Prove Percy's death, and thy unchanged affection.
Be gentle to my child, and win her heart
By confidence and unreproaching love.

Dou. By Heaven thou counsel'st well! it shall be done.

Go get him free, and let him have admittance
To my Elwina's presence.
Ra. Farewell, Douglas.
Shew thou believest her faithful, and she'll prove so.
[*Exit* RABY.
Dou. Northumberland is dead—that thought is peace!
Her heart may yet be mine, transporting hope!
Percy was gentle, even a foe avows it,
And I'll be milder than a summer's breeze.
Yes, thou most lovely, most adored of women,
I'll copy every virtue, every grace,
Of my bless'd rival, happier even in death
To be thus loved, than living to be scorn'd. [*Exit.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

A Garden at Raby Castle, with a Bower.

Enter PERCY *and* SIR HUBERT.

Sir Hu. That Percy lives, and is return'd in safety,
More joys my soul than all the mighty conquests
That sun beheld, which rose on Syria's ruin.
Per. I've told thee, good Sir Hubert, by what wonder
I was preserved, though number'd with the slain.
Sir Hu. 'Twas strange indeed!
Per. 'Twas Heaven's immediate work!
But let me now indulge a dearer joy,

Talk of a richer gift of Mercy's hand;
A gift so precious to my doting heart,
That life preserved is but a second blessing.
O Hubert, let my soul indulge its softness!
The hour, the spot, is sacred to Elwina.
This was her fav'rite walk; I well remember,
(For who forgets that loves as I have loved?)
'Twas in that very bower she gave this scarf,
Wrought by the hand of love; she bound it on,
And, smiling, cried, Whate'er befal us, Percy,
Be this the sacred pledge of faith between us.
I knelt, and swore, call'd every power to witness,
No time, nor circumstance, shou'd force it from me,
But I wou'd lose my life and that together—
Here I repeat my vow.

Sir Hu. Is this the man
Beneath whose single arm an host was crush'd?
He, at whose name the Saracen turn'd pale?
And when he fell, victorious armies wept,
And mourn'd a conquest they had bought so dear?
How has he changed the trumpet's martial note,
And all the stirring clangour of the war,
For the soft melting of the lover's lute!
Why are thine eyes still bent upon the bower?

Per. O Hubert, Hubert, to a soul enamour'd,
There is a sort of local sympathy,
Which, when we view the scenes of early passion,
Paints the bright image of the object loved
In stronger colours than remoter scenes
Cou'd ever paint it; realizes shade,
Dresses it up in all the charms it wore,
Talks to it nearer, frames its answers kinder,
Gives form to fancy, and embodies thought.

Sir Hu. I should not be believed in Percy's camp,
If I shou'd tell them that their gallant leader,
The thunder of the war, the bold Northumberland,
Renouncing Mars, dissolved in amorous wishes,

Loiter'd in shades, and pined in rosy bowers,
To catch a transient glance of two bright eyes.
Per. Enough of conquest, and enough of war!
Ambition's cloy'd—the heart resumes its rights.
When England's king, and England's good required,
This arm not idly the keen falchion brandish'd:
Enough—for vaunting misbecomes a soldier.
I live, I am return'd—am near Elwina!
Seest thou those turrets? Yes, that castle holds her;
But wherefore tell thee this? for thou hast seen her.
How look'd, what said she? Did she hear the tale
Of my imagined death without emotion?
Sir Hu. Percy, thou hast seen the musk rose newly blown,
Disclose its bashful beauties to the sun,
Till an unfriendly, chilling storm descended,
Crush'd all its blushing glories in their prime,
Bow'd its fair head, and blasted all its sweetness;
So droop'd the maid beneath the cruel weight
Of my sad tale.
Per. So tender and so true!
Sir Hu. I left her fainting in her father's arms,
The dying flower yet hanging on the tree.
Even Raby melted at the news I brought,
And envy'd thee thy glory.
Per. Then I am blest!
His hate subdued, I've nothing more to fear.
Sir Hu. My embassy dispatch'd, I left the castle,
Nor spoke to any of Lord Raby's household,
For fear the king should chide the tardiness
Of my return. My joy to find you living
You have already heard.
Per. But where is Harcourt?
Ere this he shou'd have seen her, told her all,
How I survived, return'd——and how I love!
I tremble at the near approach of bliss,
And scarcely can sustain the joy which waits me.

Sir Hu. Grant, Heaven, the fair one prove but half so true!

Per. O she is truth itself!

Sir Hu. She may be changed,
Spite of her tears, her fainting, and alarms.
I know the sex, know them as nature made 'em,
Not such as lovers wish and poets feign.

Per. To doubt her virtue were suspecting Heaven,
'Twere little less than infidelity!
And yet I tremble. Why does terror shake
These firm-strung nerves? But 'twill be ever thus,
When fate prepares us more than mortal bliss,
And gives us only human strength to bear it.

Sir Hu. What beam of brightness breaks through yonder gloom?

Per. Hubert—she comes! by all my hopes she comes!
'Tis she—the blissful vision is Elwina!
But ah! what mean those tears?—She weeps for me!
O transport!—go.—I'll listen unobserved,
And for a moment taste the precious joy,
The banquet of a tear which falls for love.

[*Exit* SIR HUBERT. PERCY *goes into the Bower.*

Enter ELWINA.

Shall I not weep? and have I then no cause?
If I could break the eternal bands of death,
And wrench the sceptre from his iron grasp;
If I could bid the yawning sepulchre
Restore to life its long-committed dust;
If I could teach the slaughtering hand of war
To give me back my dear, my murder'd Percy,
Then I indeed might once more cease to weep.

[PERCY *comes out of the Bower.*

Per. Then cease, for Percy lives.

El. Protect me, Heaven!

Per. O joy unspeakable! My life, my love!
End of my toils, and crown of all my cares!

Kind as consenting peace, as conquest bright,
Dearer than arms, and lovelier than renown!
El. It is his voice—it is, it is my Percy!
And dost thou live?
Per. I never lived till now.
El. And did my sighs, and did my sorrows reach thee?
And art thou come at last to dry my tears?
How did'st thou 'scape the fury of the foe?
Per. Thy guardian genius hover'd o'er the field,
And turn'd the hostile spear from Percy's breast,
Lest thy fair image should be wounded there.
But Harcourt should have told thee all my fate,
How I survived——
El. Alas! I have not seen him.
Oh! I have suffer'd much.
Per. Of that no more;
For every minute of our future lives
Shall be so bless'd, that we will learn to wonder
How we cou'd ever think we were unhappy.
El. Percy—I cannot speak.
Per. Those tears how eloquent!
I would not change this motionless, mute joy,
For the sweet strains of angels: I look down
With pity on the rest of human kind,
However great may be their fame of happiness,
And think their niggard fate has given them nothing,
Not giving thee; or granting some small blessing,
Denies them my capacity to feel it.
El. Alas! what mean you?
Per. Can I speak my meaning?
'Tis of such magnitude that words would wrong it;
But surely my Elwina's faithful bosom
Shou'd beat in kind responses of delight,
And feel, but never question, what I mean.
El. Hold, hold, my heart, thou hast much more to suffer!
Per. Let the slow form, and tedious ceremony

Wait on the splendid victims of ambition.
Love stays for none of these. Thy father's soften'd,
He will forget the fatal Cheviot chace;
Raby is brave, and I have served my country;
I wou'd not boast, it was for thee I conquer'd;
Then come, my love.

El. O never, never, never!

Per. Am I awake? Is that Elwina's voice?

El. Percy, thou most adored, and most deceived!
If ever fortitude sustain'd thy soul,
When vulgar minds have sunk beneath the stroke,
Let thy imperial spirit now support thee.—
If thou can'st be so wond'rous merciful,
Do not, O do not curse me!—but thou wilt,
Thou must—for I have done a fearful deed,
A deed of wild despair, a deed of horror.
I am, I am—

Per. Speak, say, what art thou?

El. Married!

Per. Oh!

El. Percy, I think I begg'd thee not to curse me;
But now I do revoke the fond petition.
Speak! ease thy bursting soul; reproach, upbraid,
O'erwhelm me with thy wrongs——I'll bear it all.

Per. Open, thou earth, and hide me from her sight!
Did'st thou not bid me curse thee?

El. Mercy! mercy!

Per. And have I 'scaped the Saracen's fell sword
Only to perish by Elwina's guilt?
I wou'd have bared my bosom to the foe,
I wou'd have died, had I but known you wish'd it.

El. Percy, I loved thee most when most I wrong'd thee;
Yes, by these tears I did.

Per. Married! just Heaven!
Married! to whom? Yet wherefore should I know?

It cannot add fresh horrors to thy crime,
Or my destruction.
El. Oh! 'twill add to both.
How shall I tell? Prepare for something dreadful.
Hast thou not heard of—Douglas?
Per. Why 'tis well!
Thou awful Power, why waste thy wrath on me?
Why arm omnipotence to crush a worm?
I cou'd have fallen without this waste of ruin.
Married to Douglas! By my wrongs I like it;
'Tis perfidy complete, 'tis finish'd falsehood,
'Tis adding fresh perdition to the sin,
And filling up the measure of offence!
El. Oh! 'twas my father's deed! he made his child
An instrument of vengeance on thy head.
He wept and threaten'd, soothed me, and commanded.
Per. And you complied, most duteously complied!
El. I cou'd withstand his fury; but his tears,
Ah, they undid me! Percy, dost thou know
The cruel tyranny of tenderness?
Hast thou e'er felt a father's warm embrace?
Hast thou e'er seen a father's flowing tears,
And known that thou cou'd'st wipe those tears away?
If thou hast felt, and hast resisted these,
Then thou may'st curse my weakness; but if not,
Thou canst not pity, for thou canst not judge.
Per. Let me not hear the music of thy voice,
Or I shall love thee still; I shall forget
Thy fatal marriage and my savage wrongs.
El. Dost thou not hate me, Percy?
Per. Hate thee? Yes,
As dying martyrs hate the righteous cause
Of that bless'd power for whom they bleed—I hate thee.
(*They look at each other in silent agony.*

Enter HARCOURT.

Har. Forgive, my lord, your faithful knight——
Per. Come, Harcourt,
Come, and behold the wretch who once was Percy.
Har. With grief I've learn'd the whole unhappy tale.
Earl Douglas, whose suspicion never sleeps—
Per. What, is the tyrant jealous?
El. Hear him, Percy.
Per. I will command my rage—Go on.
Har. Earl Douglas
Knew by my arms, and my accoutrements,
That I belong'd to you; he question'd much,
And much he menaced me, but both alike
In vain, he then arrested and confined me.
Per. Arrest my knight! The Scot shall answer it.
El. How came you now released?
Har. Your noble father
Obtain'd my freedom, having learn'd from Hubert
The news of Percy's death. The good old lord,
Hearing the king's return, has left the castle
To do him homage.
(*To* PERCY.) Sir, you had best retire;
Your safety is endanger'd by your stay.
I fear, shou'd Douglas know——
Per. Shou'd Douglas know!
Why what new magic's in the name of Douglas,
That it shou'd strike Northumberland with fear?
Go, seek the haughty Scot, and tell him—no—
Conduct me to his presence.
El. Percy, hold;
Think not 'tis Douglas—'tis—
Per. I know it well——
Thou mean'st to tell me 'tis Elwina's husband;
But that inflames me to superior madness.
This happy husband, this triumphant Douglas,

Shall not insult my misery with his bliss.
I'll blast the golden promise of his joys.
Conduct me to him—nay, I will have way——
Come let us seek this husband.

El. Percy, hear me.
When I was robb'd of all my peace of mind,
My cruel fortune left me still one blessing,
One solitary blessing, to console me;
It was my fame.—'Tis a rich jewel, Percy,
And I must keep it spotless, and unsoil'd:
But thou wou'dst plunder what e'en Douglas spared,
And rob this single gem of all its brightness.

Per. Go—thou wast born to rule the fate of Percy.
Thou art my conqueror still.

El. What noise is that?

(HARCOURT *goes to the side of the Stage.*

Per. Why art thou thus alarm'd?

El. Alas! I feel
The cowardice and terrors of the wicked,
Without their sense of guilt.

Har. My lord, 'tis Douglas.

El. Fly, Percy, and for ever!

Per. Fly from Douglas?

El. Then stay, barbarian, and at once destroy
My life and fame.

Per. That thought is death. I go.
My honour to thy dearer honour yields.

El. Yet, yet thou art not gone!

Per. Farewell, farewell! (*Exit* PERCY.

El. I dare not meet the searching eye of Douglas.
I must conceal my terrors.

DOUGLAS *at the Side with his sword drawn,* EDRIC *holds him.*

Dou. Give me way.

Ed. Thou shalt not enter.

Dou. (*Struggling with* EDRIC.) If there were no hell,

It would defraud my vengeance of its edge,
And he should live.
(*Breaks from* EDRIC, *and comes forward.*
Cursed chance! he is not here.
El. (*Going.*) I dare not meet his fury.
Dou. See she flies
With every mark of guilt.—Go, search the bower,
[*Aside to* EDRIC.
He shall not thus escape. Madam, return. (*Aloud.*
Now, honest Douglas, learn of her to feign. (*Aside.*
Alone, Elwina? who just parted hence?
(*With affected composure.*
El. My lord, 'twas Harcourt; sure you must have met him.
Dou. O exquisite dissembler! (*Aside.*) No one else?
El. My lord!
Dou. How I enjoy her criminal confusion! (*Aside.*
You tremble, madam.
El. Wherefore shou'd I tremble?
By your permission Harcourt was admitted;
'Twas no mysterious, secret introduction.
Dou. And yet you seem alarm'd.—If Harcourt's presence
Thus agitates each nerve, makes every pulse
Thus wildly throb, and the warm tides of blood
Mount in quick rushing tumults to your cheek;
If friendship can excite such strong emotions,
What tremours had a lover's presence caused?
El. Ungenerous man!
Dou. I feast upon her terrors. (*Aside.*
The story of his death was well contrived; (*To her.*
But it affects not me; I have a wife,
Compared with whom cold Dian was unchaste.
(*Takes her hand.*
But mark me well—though it concerns not you—
If there's a sin more deeply black than others,
Distinguish'd from the list of common crimes,

A legion in itself, and doubly dear
To the dark prince of hell, it is—hypocrisy.
(*Throws her from him and exit.*
El. Yes, I will bear his fearful indignation!
Thou melting heart be firm as adamant;
Ye shatter'd nerves be strung with manly force,
That I may conquer all my sex's weakness,
Nor let this bleeding bosom lodge one thought,
Cherish one wish, or harbour one desire,
That angels may not hear and Douglas know. (*Exit.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

The Hall.

Enter DOUGLAS, *his sword drawn and bloody in one hand, in the other a letter.* HARCOURT *wounded.*

Dou. Traitor, no more! This letter shews thy office:
Twice hast thou robb'd me of my dear revenge.
I took thee for thy leader.—Thy base blood
Wou'd stain the noble temper of my sword,

But as the pander to thy master's lust,
Thou justly fall'st by a wrong'd husband's hand.

Har. Thy wife is innocent.

Dou. Take him away.

Har. Percy, revenge my fall!

(*Guards bear* HARCOURT *in.*

Dou. Now for the letter!
He begs once more to see her.—So 'tis plain
They have already met!—but to the rest——
(*Reads.*) "In vain you wish me to restore the scarf;
Dear pledge of love, while I have life I'll wear it,
'Tis next my heart; no power shall force it thence;
Whene'er you see it in another's hand
Conclude me dead."—My curses on them both!
How tamely I peruse my shame! But thus,
Thus let me tear the guilty characters
Which register my infamy; and thus,
Thus wou'd I scatter to the winds of heaven
The vile complotters of my foul dishonour.

(*Tears the letter in the utmost agitation.*

Enter EDRIC.

Ed. My lord——

Dou. (*In the utmost fury, not seeing* EDRIC.) The scarf!

Ed. Lord Douglas.

Dou. (*Still not hearing him.*) Yes, the scarf!
Percy, I thank thee for the glorious thought!
I'll cherish it; 'twill sweeten all my pangs,
And add a higher relish to revenge!

Ed. My lord!

Dou. How! Edric here?

Ed. What new distress?

Dou. Dost thou expect I shou'd recount my shame,
Dwell on each circumstance of my disgrace,
And swell my infamy into a tale?
Rage will not let me—But—my wife is false.

Ed. Art thou convinced?

Dou. The chronicles of hell
Cannot produce a falser.—But what news
Of her cursed paramour?
Ed. He has escaped.
Dou. Hast thou examined every avenue?
Each spot? the grove? the bower, her favourite haunt?
Ed. I've search'd them all.
Dou. He shall be yet pursued.
Set guards at every gate.—Let none depart,
Or gain admittance here, without my knowledge.
Ed. What can their purpose be?
Dou. Is it not clear?
Harcourt has raised his arm against my life;
He fail'd; the blow is now reserved for Percy;
Then with his sword fresh reeking from my heart,
He'll revel with that wanton o'er my tomb;
Nor will he bring her aught she'll hold so dear,
As the cursed hand with which he slew her husband.
But he shall die! I'll drown my rage in blood,
Which I will offer as a rich libation
On thy infernal altar, black revenge! (*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Garden.

Enter ELWINA.

El. Each avenue is so beset with guards,
And lynx-eyed Jealousy so broad awake,
He cannot pass unseen. Protect him, heaven!

Enter BIRTHA.

My Birtha, is he safe? Has he escaped?

Bir. I know not. I dispatch'd young Harcourt to him,
To bid him quit the castle, as you order'd,
Restore the scarf, and never see you more.
But how the hard injunction was received,
Or what has happen'd since, I'm yet to learn.

El. O when shall I be eased of all my cares,
And in the quiet bosom of the grave
Lay down this weary head!—I'm sick at heart!
Shou'd Douglas intercept his flight!

Bir. Be calm;
Douglas this very moment left the castle,
With seeming peace.

El. Ah, then, indeed there's danger!
Birtha, whene'er Suspicion feigns to sleep,
'Tis but to make its careless prey secure.

Bir. Shou'd Percy once again entreat to see thee,
'Twere best admit him; from thy lips alone
He will submit to hear his final doom
Of everlasting exile.

El. Birtha, no:
If honour wou'd allow the wife of Douglas
To meet his rival, yet I durst not do it.
Percy! too much this rebel heart is thine:
Too deeply should I feel each pang I gave;
I cannot hate—but I will banish thee.
Inexorable duty, O forgive,
If I can do no more!

Bir. If he remains,
As I suspect, within the castle walls,
'Twere best I sought him out.

El. Then tell him, Birtha,
But, Oh! with gentleness, with mercy tell him,
That we must never, never meet again.
The purport of my tale must be severe,
But let thy tenderness embalm the wound
My virtue gives. O soften his despair;
But say—we meet no more.

Enter PERCY.

Rash man, he's here!

(*She attempts to go, he seizes her hand.*

Per. I will be heard; nay, fly not; I will speak;
Lost as I am, I will not be denied
The mournful consolation to complain.

El. Percy, I charge thee, leave me.

Per. Tyrant, no:
I blush at my obedience, blush to think
I left thee here alone, to brave the danger
I now return to share.

El. That danger's past:
Douglas was soon appeased; he nothing knows.
Then leave me, I conjure thee, nor again
Endanger my repose. Yet, ere thou goest,
Restore the scarf.

Per. Unkind Elwina, never!
'Tis all that's left me of my buried joys,
All which reminds me that I once was happy.
My letter told thee I wou'd ne'er restore it.

El. Letter! what letter?

Per. That I sent by Harcourt.

El. Which I have ne'er received. Douglas perhaps—
Who knows?

Bir. Harcourt, t' elude his watchfulness,
Might prudently retire.

El. Grant Heaven it prove so!

(ELWINA *going*, PERCY *holds her.*

Per. Hear me, Elwina; the most savage honour
Forbids not that poor grace.

El. It bids me fly thee.

Per. Then ere thou goest, if we indeed must part,
To sooth the horrors of eternal exile,
Say but—thou pity'st me!

El. (*Weeps.*) O Percy—pity thee!
Imperious honour;—surely I may pity him.

Yet, wherefore pity? no, I envy thee:
For thou hast still the liberty to weep,
In thee 'twill be no crime; thy tears are guiltless,
For they infringe no duty, stain no honour,
And blot no vow; but mine are criminal,
Are drops of shame which wash the cheek of guilt,
And every tear I shed dishonours Douglas.

Per. I swear my jealous love e'en grudges thee
Thy sad pre-eminence in wretchedness.

El. Rouse, rouse, my slumb'ring virtue! Percy, hear me.
Heaven, when it gives such high-wrought souls as thine,
Still gives as great occasions to exert them.
If thou wast form'd so noble, great, and gen'rous,
'Twas to surmount the passions which enslave
The gross of humankind.—Then think, O think,
She whom thou once didst love is now another's.

Per. Go on—and tell me that that other's Douglas.

El. Whate'er his name, he claims respect from me:
His honour's in my keeping, and I hold
The trust so pure, its sanctity is hurt
Ev'n by thy presence.

Per. Thou again hast conquer'd.
Celestial virtue, like the angel-spirit,
Whose flaming sword defended Paradise,
Stands guard on every charm.—Elwina, yes,
To triumph over Douglas, we'll be virtuous.

El. 'Tis not enough to be,—we must appear so:
Great souls disdain the shadow of offence,
Nor must their whiteness wear the stain of guilt.

Per. I shall retract—I dare not gaze upon thee;
My feeble virtue staggers, and again
The fiends of jealousy torment and haunt me.
They tear my heart-strings.——Oh!

El. No more;
But spare my injured honour the affront
To vindicate itself.

Per. But love!
El. But glory!
Per. Enough! a ray of thy sublimer spirit
Has warm'd my dying honour to a flame!
One effort and 'tis done. The world shall say,
When they shall speak of my disastrous love,
Percy deserved Elwina though he lost her.
Fond tears, blind me not yet! a little longer,
Let my sad eyes a little longer gaze,
And leave their last beams here.
El. (*Turns from him.*) I do not weep.
Per. Not weep? Then why those eyes avoiding mine?
And why that broken voice? those trembling accents?
That sigh which rends my soul?
El. No more, no more.
Per. That pang decides it. Come—I'll die at once;
Thou Power supreme! take all the length of days,
And all the blessings kept in store for me,
And add to her account.—Yet turn once more,
One little look, one last, short glimpse of day,
And then a long dark night.—Hold, hold, my heart,
O break not yet, while I behold her sweetness;
For after this dear, mournful, tender moment,
I shall have nothing more to do with life.
El. I do conjure thee go.
Per. 'Tis terrible to nature!
With pangs like these the soul and body part!
And thus, but oh, with far less agony,
The poor departing wretch still grasps at being,
Thus clings to life, thus dreads the dark unknown,
Thus struggles to the last to keep his hold;
And when the dire convulsive groan of death
Dislodges the sad spirit—thus it stays,
And fondly hovers o'er the form it loved.
Once and no more—farewell, farewell!
El. For ever!

(*They look at each other for some time, then exit* PERCY. *After a pause,*

'Tis past—the conflict's past! retire, my Birtha,
I wou'd address me to the throne of grace.

Bir. May Heaven restore that peace thy bosom wants! (*Exit* BIRTHA.

El. (*Kneels.*) Look down, thou awful, heart-inspecting Judge,
Look down with mercy on thy erring creature,
And teach my soul the lowliness it needs!
And if some sad remains of human weakness
Shou'd sometimes mingle with my best resolves,
O breathe thy spirit on this wayward heart,
And teach me to repent th' intruding sin
In it's first birth of thought!
(*Noise without.*) What noise is that?
The clash of swords! Shou'd Douglas be return'd!

Enter DOUGLAS *and* PERCY *fighting.*

Dou. Yield, villain, yield!

Per. Not till this good right arm
Shall fail its master.

Dou. This to thy heart then.

Per. Defend thy own.

(*They fight.* PERCY *disarms* DOUGLAS.

Dou. Confusion, death, and hell!

Ed. (*Without.*) This way I heard the noise.

Enter EDRIC, *and many Knights and Guards from every part of the Stage.*

Per. Cursed treachery!
But dearly will I sell my life.

Dou. Seize on him.

Per. I'm taken in the toils.

(PERCY *is surrounded by Guards, who take his sword.*

Dou. In the cursed snare
Thou laid'st for me, traitor, thyself art caught.

El. He never sought thy life.
Dou. Adulteress, peace!
The villain Harcourt too—but he's at rest.
Per. Douglas, I'm in thy power; but do not triumph,
Percy's betray'd, not conquer'd. Come, dispatch me.
El. (*To* Doug.) O do not, do not kill him!
Per. Madam, forbear;
For by the glorious shades of my great fathers,
Their godlike spirit is not so extinct,
That I should owe my life to that vile Scot.
Though dangers close me round on every side,
And death besets me, I am Percy still.
Dou. Sorceress, I'll disappoint thee—he shall die,
Thy minion shall expire before thy face,
That I may feast my hatred with your pangs,
And make his dying groans, and thy fond tears,
A banquet for my vengeance.
El. Savage tyrant!
I would have fallen a silent sacrifice,
So thou had'st spared my fame.—I never wrong'd thee.
Per. She knew not of my coming;—I alone
Have been to blame—Spite of her interdiction,
I hither came. She's pure as spotless saints.
El. I will not be excused by Percy's crime;
So white my innocence it does not ask
The shade of others' faults to set it off;
Nor shall he need to sully his fair fame
To throw a brighter lustre round my virtue.
Dou. Yet he can only die—but death for honour!
Ye powers of hell, who take malignant joy
In human bloodshed, give me some dire means,
Wild as my hate, and desperate as my wrongs!
Per. Enough of words. Thou know'st I hate thee, Douglas;
'Tis stedfast, fix'd, hereditary hate,

As thine for me; our fathers did bequeath it
As part of our unalienable birthright,
Which nought but death can end.—Come, end it here.

El. (*Kneels.*) Hold, Douglas, hold!—not for myself I kneel,
I do not plead for Percy, but for thee:
Arm not thy hand against thy future peace,
Spare thy brave breast the tortures of remorse,—
Stain not a life of unpolluted honour,
For, oh! as surely as thou strik'st at Percy,
Thou wilt for ever stab the fame of Douglas.

Per. Finish the bloody work.

Dou. Then take thy wish.

Per. Why dost thou start?

(PERCY *bares his bosom.* DOUGLAS *advances to stab him, and discovers the scarf.*

Dou. Her scarf upon his breast!
The blasting sight converts me into stone;
Withers my powers like cowardice or age,
Curdles the blood within my shiv'ring veins,
And palsies my bold arm.

Per. (*Ironically to the Knights.*) Hear you, his friends!
Bear witness to the glorious, great exploit,
Record it in the annals of his race,
That Douglas the renown'd—the valiant Douglas,
Fenced round with guards, and safe in his own castle,
Surprised a knight unarm'd, and bravely slew him.

Dou. (*Throwing away his dagger.*) 'Tis true—I am the very stain of knighthood.
How is my glory dimm'd!

El. It blazes brighter!
Douglas was only brave—he now is generous!

Per. This action has restored thee to thy rank,
And makes thee worthy to contend with Percy.

Dou. Thy joy will be as short as 'tis insulting.
(*To* ELWINA.
And thou, imperious boy, restrain thy boasting.
Thou hast saved my honour, not removed my hate,
For my soul loaths thee for the obligation.
Give him his sword.

Per. Now thou'rt a noble foe,
And in the field of honour I will meet thee,
As knight encount'ring knight.

El. Stay, Percy, stay,
Strike at the wretched cause of all, strike here,
Here sheathe thy thirsty sword, but spare my husband.

Dou. Turn, madam, and address those vows to me,
To spare the precious life of him you love.
Even now you triumph in the death of Douglas,
Now your loose fancy kindles at the thought,
And wildly rioting in lawless hope,
Indulges the adultery of the mind.
But I'll defeat that wish.—Guards, bear her in.
Nay, do not struggle. (*She is borne in.*

Per. Let our deaths suffice,
And reverence virtue in that form inshrined.

Dou. Provoke my rage no farther.—I have kindled
The burning torch of never-dying vengeance
At love's expiring lamp.—But mark me, friends,
If Percy's happier genius should prevail,
And I should fall, give him safe conduct hence,
Be all observance paid him.—Go, I follow thee.
(*Aside to* EDRIC.
Within I've something for thy private ear.

Per. Now shall this mutual fury be appeased!
These eager hands shall soon be drench'd in slaughter!
Yes—like two famish'd vultures snuffing blood,
And panting to destroy, we'll rush to combat;
Yet I've the deepest, deadliest cause of hate,
I am but Percy, thou'rt—Elwina's husband.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

ELWINA'S *Apartment.*

El. Thou who in judgement still remember'st mercy,
Look down upon my woes, preserve my husband!
Preserve my husband! Ah, I dare not ask it;
My very prayers may pull down ruin on me!
If Douglas should survive, what then becomes
Of—him—I dare not name? And if he conquers,
I've slain my husband. Agonizing state!
When I can neither hope, nor think, nor pray,
But guilt involves me. Sure to know the worst
Cannot exceed the torture of suspense,
When each event is big with equal horror.
(*Looks out.*
What, no one yet? This solitude is dreadful!
My horrors multiply!

Enter BIRTHA.

Thou messenger of woe!
Bir. Of woe indeed!
El. How, is my husband dead?
Oh, speak!
Bir. Your husband lives.
El. Then farewell Percy!

He was the tenderest, truest!—Bless him, Heaven,
With crowns of glory and immortal joys!

Bir. Still are you wrong; the combat is not over.
Stay, flowing tears, and give me leave to speak.

El. Thou sayest that Percy and my husband live;
Then why this sorrow?

Bir. What a task is mine!

El. Thou talk'st as if I were a child in grief,
And scarce acquainted with calamity.
Speak out, unfold thy tale whate'er it be,
For I am so familiar with affliction,
It cannot come in any shape will shock me.

Bir. How shall I speak? Thy husband——

El. What of Douglas?

Bir. When all was ready for the fatal combat,
He call'd his chosen knights, then drew his sword,
And on it made them swear a solemn oath,
Confirm'd by every rite religion bids,
That they would see perform'd his last request,
Be it whate'er it would. Alas! they swore.

El. What did the dreadful preparation mean?

Bir. Then to their hands he gave a poison'd cup,
Compounded of the deadliest herbs and drugs;
Take this, said he, it is a husband's legacy;
Percy may conquer—and—I have a wife!
If Douglas falls, Elwina must not live.

El. Spirit of Herod! Why, 'twas greatly thought!
'Twas worthy of the bosom which conceived it!
Yet 'twas too merciful to be his own.
Yes, Douglas, yes, my husband, I'll obey thee,
And bless thy genius which has found the means
To reconcile thy vengeance with my peace,
The deadly means to make obedience pleasant.

Bir. O spare, for pity spare my bleeding heart:
Inhuman to the last! Unnatural poison!

El. My gentle friend, what is there in a name?
The means are little where the end is kind.
If it disturb thee do not call it poison;

Call it the sweet oblivion of my cares,
My balm of woe, my cordial of affliction,
The drop of mercy to my fainting soul,
My kind dismission from a world of sorrow,
My cup of bliss, my passport to the skies.

Bir. Hark! what alarm is that?

El. The combat's over! (BIRTHA *goes out.*

(ELWINA *stands in a fix'd attitude, her hands clasp'd.*

Now, gracious Heaven, sustain me in the trial,
And bow my spirit to thy great decrees!

Re-enter BIRTHA.

(ELWINA *looks stedfastly at her without speaking.*

Bir. Douglas is fallen.

El. Bring me the poison.

Bir. Never.

El. Where are the knights? I summon you—approach!
Draw near, ye awful ministers of fate,
Dire instruments of posthumous revenge!
Come—I am ready; but your tardy justice
Defrauds the injured dead.—Go, haste, my friend,
See that the castle be securely guarded,
Let every gate be barr'd—prevent his entrance.

Bir. Whose entrance?

El. His—the murderer of my husband.

Bir. He's single, we have hosts of friends.

El. No matter;
Who knows what love and madness may attempt?
But here I swear by all that binds the good,
Never to see him more.—Unhappy Douglas!
O if thy troubled spirit still is conscious
Of our past woes, look down, and hear me swear,
That when the legacy thy rage bequeath'd me
Works at my heart, and conquers struggling nature,
Ev'n in that agony I'll still be faithful.
She who could never love, shall yet obey thee,
Weep thy hard fate, and die to prove her truth.

Bir. O unexampled virtue! (*A noise without.*

El. Heard you nothing?
By all my fears the insulting conqueror comes.
O save me, shield me!

Enter DOUGLAS.

Heaven and earth, my husband!

Dou. Yes——
To blast thee with the sight of him thou hat'st,
Of him thou hast wrong'd, adulteress, 'tis thy husband.

El. (*Kneels.*) Blest be the fountain of eternal mercy,
This load of guilt is spared me! Douglas lives!
Perhaps both live! (*To* BIRTHA.) Could I be sure of that,
The poison were superfluous, joy would kill me.

Dou. Be honest now, for once, and curse thy stars;
Curse thy detested fate which brings thee back
A hated husband, when thy guilty soul
Revell'd in fond, imaginary joys
With my too happy rival; when thou flew'st,
To gratify impatient, boundless passion,
And join adulterous lust to bloody murder;
Then to reverse the scene! polluted woman!
Mine is the transport now, and thine the pang.

El. Whence sprung the false report that thou had'st fallen?

Dou. To give thy guilty breast a deeper wound,
To add a deadlier sting to disappointment,
I raised it—I contrived—I sent it thee.

El. Thou seest me bold, but bold in conscious virtue.
—That my sad soul may not be stain'd with blood,
That I may spend my few short hours in peace,
And die in holy hope of Heaven's forgiveness,
Relieve the terrors of my lab'ring breast,
Say I am clear of murder—say he lives,

Say but that little word, that Percy lives,
And Alps and oceans shall divide us ever,
As far as universal space can part us.
Dou. Canst thou renounce him?
El. Tell me that he lives,
And thou shalt be the ruler of my fate,
For ever hide me in a convent's gloom,
From cheerful day-light, and the haunts of men,
Where sad austerity and ceaseless prayer
Shall share my uncomplaining day between them.
Dou. O, hypocrite! now, Vengeance, to thy office,
I had forgot—Percy commends him to thee,
And by my hand——
El. How—by thy hand?
Dou. Has sent thee
This precious pledge of love.
(*He gives her* PERCY'S *scarf.*
El. Then Percy's dead!
Dou. He is.—O great revenge, thou now art mine!
See how convulsive sorrow rends her frame!
This, this is transport!—injured honour now
Receives its vast, its ample retribution.
She sheds no tears, her grief's too highly wrought;
'Tis speechless agony.—She must not faint—
She shall not 'scape her portion of the pain.
No! she shall feel the fulness of distress,
And wake to keen perception of her loss.
Bir. Monster! Barbarian! leave her to her sorrows.
El. (*In a low broken voice.*) Douglas—think not I faint, because thou see'st
The pale and bloodless cheek of wan despair.
Fail me not yet, my spirits; thou cold heart,
Cherish thy freezing current one short moment,
And bear thy mighty load a little longer.
Dou. Percy, I must avow it, bravely fought,—
Died as a hero shou'd;—but, as he fell,

(Hear it, fond wanton !) call'd upon thy name,
And his last guilty breath sigh'd out—Elwina !
Come—give a loose to rage, and feed my soul
With wild complaints, and womanish upbraidings.
El. (*In a low solemn voice.*) No.
The sorrow's weak that wastes itself in words,
Mine is substantial anguish—deep, not loud;
I do not rave.——Resentment's the return
Of common souls for common injuries.
Light grief is proud of state, and courts compassion;
But there's a dignity in cureless sorrow,
A sullen grandeur which disdains complaint;
Rage is for little wrongs—Despair is dumb.
(*Exeunt* ELWINA *and* BIRTHA.
Dou. Why this is well !—her sense of woe is strong!
The sharp, keen tooth of gnawing grief devours her,
Feeds on her heart, and pays me back my pangs.
Since I must perish, 'twill be glorious ruin:
I fall not singly, but, like some proud tower,
I'll crush surrounding objects in the wreck,
And make the devastation wide and dreadful.

Enter RABY.

Ra. O whither shall a wretched father turn?
Where fly for comfort? Douglas, art thou here?
I do not ask for comfort at thy hands.
I'd but one little casket, where I lodged
My precious hoard of wealth, and, like an idiot,
I gave my treasure to another's keeping,
Who threw away the gem, nor knew its value,
But left the plunder'd owner quite a beggar.
Dou. What! art thou come to see thy race dishonour'd?
And thy bright sun of glory set in blood?
I would have spared thy virtues, and thy age,
The knowledge of her infamy.
Ra. 'Tis false.
Had she been base, this sword had drank her blood.
Dou. Ha! dost thou vindicate the wanton?

Ra. Wanton?
Thou hast defamed a noble lady's honour—
My spotless child—in me behold her champion:
The strength of Hercules will nerve this arm,
When lifted in defence of innocence.
The daughter's virtue for the father's shield,
Will make old Raby still invincible. (*Offers to draw.*
Dou. Forbear.
Ra. Thou dost disdain my feeble arm,
And scorn my age.
Dou. There will be blood enough;
Nor need thy wither'd veins, old lord, be drain'd,
To swell the copious stream.
Ra. Thou wilt not kill her?
Dou. Oh, 'tis a day of horror!

Enter EDRIC *and* BIRTHA.

Ed. Where is Douglas?
I come to save him from the deadliest crime
Revenge did ever meditate.
Dou. What meanest thou?
Ed. This instant fly, and save thy guiltless wife.
Dou. Save that perfidious——
Ed. That much-injured woman.
Bir. Unfortunate indeed, but O most innocent!
Ed. In the last solemn article of death,
That truth-compelling state, when even bad men
Fear to speak falsely, Percy clear'd her fame.
Dou. I heard him—'Twas the guilty fraud of love.
The scarf, the scarf! that proof of mutual passion,
Given but this day to ratify their crimes!
Bir. What means my lord? This day? that fatal scarf
Was given long since, a toy of childish friendship;
Long ere your marriage, ere you knew Elwina.
Ra. 'Tis I am guilty
Dou. Ha!
Ra. I,—I alone.
Confusion, honour, pride, parental fondness,

Distract my soul,—Percy was not to blame,
He was—the destined husband of Elwina!
He loved her—was beloved,—and I approved.
The tale is long.—I changed my purpose since,
Forbad their marriage—

Dou. And confirm'd my mis'ry!
Twice did they meet to-day—my wife and Percy.

Ra. I know it.

Dou. Ha! thou knew'st of my dishonour?
Thou wast a witness, an approving witness,
At least a tame one!

Ra. Percy came, 'tis true,
A constant, tender, but a guiltless lover!

Dou. I shall grow mad indeed! a guiltless lover!
Percy, the guiltless lover of my wife!

Ra. He knew not she was married.

Dou. How? is't possible?

Ra. Douglas, 'tis true; both, both were innocent:
He of her marriage, she of his return.

Bir. But now, when we believed thee dead, she vow'd
Never to see thy rival. Instantly,
Not in a start of momentary passion,
But with a martyr's dignity and calmness,
She bade me bring the poison.

Dou. Had'st thou done it,
Despair had been my portion! Fly, good Birtha,
Find out the suffering saint—describe my penitence,
And paint my vast extravagance of fondness,
Tell her I love as never mortal loved—
Tell her I know her virtues, and adore them—
Tell her I come, but dare not seek her presence,
Till she pronounce my pardon.

Bir. I obey. (*Exit* BIRTHA.

Ra. My child is innocent! ye choirs of saints,
Catch the blest sounds—my child is innocent!

Dou. O I will kneel, and sue for her forgiveness,
And thou shalt help me plead the cause of love,
And thou shalt weep—she cannot sure refuse

A kneeling husband and a weeping father.
Thy venerable cheek is wet already.
Ra. Douglas! it is the dew of grateful joy!
My child is innocent! I now wou'd die,
Lest fortune shou'd grow weary of her kindness,
And grudge me this short transport.
Dou. Where, where is she?
My fond impatience brooks not her delay;
Quick, let me find her, hush her anxious soul,
And sooth her troubled spirit into peace.

Enter BIRTHA.

Bir. O horror, horror, horror!
Dou. Ah! what mean'st thou?
Bir. Elwina—
Dou. Speak—
Bir. Her grief wrought up to frenzy,
She has, in her delirium, swallow'd poison.
Ra. Frenzy and poison!
Dou. Both a husband's gift;
But thus I do her justice.

As DOUGLAS *goes to stab himself, enter* ELWINA *distracted, her hair dishevelled,* PERCY'S *scarf in her hand.*

El. (*Goes up to* DOUGLAS.) What, blood again?
We cannot kill him twice!
Soft, soft—no violence—he's dead already;—
I did it—Yes—I drown'd him with my tears;
But hide the cruel deed! I'll scratch him out
A shallow grave, and lay the green sod on it;
Ay—and I'll bind the wild briar o'er the turf,
And plant a willow there, a weeping willow—
(*She sits on the ground.*
But look you tell not Douglas, he'll disturb him;
He'll pluck the willow up—and plant a thorn.
He will not let me sit upon his grave,
And sing all day, and weep and pray all night.
Ra. Dost thou not know me?

El. Yes—I do remember
You had a harmless lamb.
Ra. I had indeed!
El. From all the flock you chose her out a mate,
In sooth a fair one—you did bid her love it—
But while the shepherd slept the wolf devour'd it.
Ra. My heart will break. This is too much, too much!
El. (*Smiling.*) O 'twas a cordial draught—I drank it all.
Ra. What means my child?
Dou. The poison! Oh the poison!
Thou dear wrong'd innocence—
El. Off—murderer, off!
Do not defile me with those crimson hands.
[*Shews the scarf.*
This is his winding sheet—I'll wrap him in it—
I wrought it for my love—there—now I've drest him.
How brave he looks! my father will forgive him,
He dearly loved him once—but that is over.
See where he comes—beware, my gallant Percy,
Ah! come not here, this is the cave of death,
And there's the dark, dark palace of Revenge!
See, the pale king sits on his blood-stain'd throne!
He points to me—I come, I come, I come.
[*She faints, they run to her,* DOUGLAS *takes up his sword and stabs himself.*
Dou. Thus, thus I follow thee.
Ed. Hold thy rash hand!
Dou. It is too late. No remedy but this
Cou'd medicine a disease so desperate.
Ra. Ah she revives!
Dou. [*Raising himself.*] She lives! bear, bear me to her!
We shall be happy yet.
[*He struggles to get to her, but sinks down.*
It will not be—
O for a last embrace—Alas I faint—
She lives—Now death is terrible indeed—

Fair spirit, I loved thee—O—Elwina! [*Dies*

El. Where have I been? The damps of death are on me.

Ra. Look up, my child! O do not leave me thus! Pity the anguish of thy aged father. Hast thou forgot me?

El. No—you are my father; O you are kindly come to close my eyes, And take the kiss of death from my cold lips!

Ra. Do we meet thus?

El. We soon shall meet in peace. I've but a faint remembrance of the past— But something tells me—O those painful struggles! Raise me a little—there—

[*She sees the body of* DOUGLAS.

What sight is that? A sword, and bloody? Ah! and Douglas murder'd!

Ed. Convinced too late of your unequall'd virtues, And wrung with deep compunction for your wrongs, By his own hand the wretched Douglas fell.

El. This adds another, sharper pang to death. O thou Eternal! take him to thy mercy, Nor let this sin be on his head, or mine!

Ra. I have undone you all—the crime is mine! O thou poor injured saint, forgive thy father, He kneels to his wrong'd child.

El. Now you are cruel. Come near, my father, nearer—I wou'd see you, But mists and darkness cloud my failing sight. O Death! suspend thy rights for one short moment, Till I have ta'en a father's last embrace— A father's blessing.—Once—and now 'tis over. Receive me to thy mercy, gracious Heaven!

[*She dies.*

Ra. She's gone! for ever gone! cold, dead and cold. Am I a father? Fathers love their children—— I murder mine! With impious pride I snatch'd

The bolt of vengeance from the hand of Heaven.
My punishment is great—but oh! 'tis just.
My soul submissive bows. A righteous God
Has made my crime become my chastisement.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

A

TRIP TO SCARBOROUGH,

A

COMEDY.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

ALTERED FROM

VANBURGH'S RELAPSE, OR VIRTUE IN DANGER.

BY

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN, Esq.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Lord Foppington,	*Mr Dodd.*
Young Fashion,	*Mr Palmer.*
Loveless,	*Mr Smith.*
Colonel Townly,	*Mr Brereton.*
Sir Tunbelly Clumsy,	*Mr Moody.*
Probe,	*Mr Parsons.*
Lory,	*Mr Baddely.*
La Varole,	*Mr Burton.*
Shoemaker,	*Mr Carpenter.*
Tailor,	*Mr Baker.*
Hosier,	*Mr Norris.*
Jeweller,	*Mr La Mash.*

Servants, &c.

Berinthia,	*Miss Farren.*
Amanda,	*Mrs Robinson.*
Mrs Coupler,	*Mrs Booth.*
Nurse,	*Mrs Bradshaw.*
Miss Hoyden,	*Mrs Abington.*

TRIP TO SCARBOROUGH.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

The Hall of an Inn.

nter YOUNG FASHION *and* LORY—*Postillion following with a portmanteau.*

Y. Fash. Lory, pay the post-boy, and take the portmanteau.

Lory. Faith, sir, we had better let the post-boy take the portmanteau and pay himself.

Y. Fash. Why sure there's something left in it?

Lory. Not a rag, upon my honour, sir—we eat the last of your wardrobe at Newmalton; and if we had had twenty miles farther to go, our next meal must have been off the cloak-bag.

Y. Fash. Why, 'sdeath! it appears full.

Lory. Yes, sir—I made bold to stuff it with hay, to save appearances, and look like baggage.

Y. Fash. What the devil shall I do!——Hark'e, boy, what's the chaise?

Boy. Thirteen shillings, please your honour.

Y. Fash. Can you give me change for a guinea?

Boy. O yes, sir.

Lory. Soh, what will he do now?—Lord, sir, you had better let the boy be paid below.

Y. Fash. Why, as you say, Lory, I believe it will be as well.

Lory. Yes, yes; tell them to discharge you below, honest friend.

Boy. Please your honour, there are the turnpikes too.

Y. Fash. Ay, ay, the turnpikes by all means.

Boy. And I hope your honour will order me something for myself.

Y. Fash. To be sure, bid them give you a crown.

Lory. Yes, yes—my master doesn't care what you charge them—so get along, you—

Boy. Your honour promised to send the hostler—

Lory. Pshaw! damn the hostler—would you impose upon the gentleman's generosity?—[*Pushes him out.*]—A rascal, to be so curst ready with his change!

Y. Fash. Why faith, Lory, he had near posed me.

Lory. Well, sir, we are arrived at Scarborough, not worth a guinea!—I hope you'll own yourself a happy man—You have outlived all your cares.

Y. Fash. How so, sir?

Lory. Why you have nothing left to take care of.

Y. Fash. Yes, sirrah, I have myself and you to take care of still.

Lory. Sir, if you could prevail with somebody else to do that for you, I fancy we might both fare the better for't—But now, sir, for my Lord Foppington, your elder brother.

Y. Fash. Damn my elder brother!

Lory. With all my heart; but get him to redeem your annuity, however.—Look you, sir, you must wheedle him, or you must starve.

Y. Fash. Look you, sir, I will neither weedle him nor starve.

Lory. Why, what will you do then?

Y. Fash. Cut his throat, or get some one to do it for me.

Lory. Gad-so, sir, I'm glad to find I was not so well acquainted with the strength of your conscience as with the weakness of your purse.

Y. Fash. Why, art thou so impenetrable a blockhead as to believe he'll help me with a farthing?

Lory. Not if you treat him *de haut en bas*, as you used to do.

Y. Fash. Why, how would'st have me treat him?

Lory. Like a trout—tickle him.

Y. Fash. I can't flatter.

Lory. Can you starve?

Y. Fash. Yes.

Lory. I can't—Good-bye t'ye, sir.

Y. Fash. Stay—thou'lt distract me.—But who comes here—my old friend, Colonel Townly.

Enter COLONEL TOWNLY.

Y. Fash. My dear colonel, I am rejoiced to meet you here.

Town. Dear Tom, this is an unexpected pleasure—What, are you come to Scarbro' to be present at your brother's wedding?

Lory. Ah, sir, if it had been his funeral, we should have come with pleasure.

Town. What, honest Lory, are you with your master still?

Lory. Yes, sir, I have been starving with him ever since I saw your honour last.

Y. Fash. Why, Lory is an attach'd rogue; there's no getting rid of him.

Lory. True, sir, as my master says, there's no seducing me from his service,—till he's able to pay me my wages. [*Aside.*

Y. Fash. Go, go, sir—and take care of the baggage.

Lory. Yes, sir—the baggage!—O Lord!—I suppose, sir, I must charge the landlord to be very particular where he stows this.

Y. Fash. Get along, you rascal.

[*Exit* LORY, *with the portmanteau.*

But, colonel, are you acquainted with my proposed sister-in-law?

Town. Only by character—her father, Sir Tunbelly Clumsy, lives within a quarter of a mile of this place, in a lonely old house, which nobody comes near. She never goes abroad, nor sees company at home; to prevent all misfortunes, she has her breeding within doors; the parson of the parish teaches her to play upon the dulcimer, the clerk to sing, her nurse to dress, and her father to dance:—in short, nobody has free admission there but our old acquaintance, Mother Coupler, who has procured your brother this match, and is, I believe, a distant relation of Sir Tunbelly's.

Y. Fash. But is her fortune so considerable?

Town. Three thousand a year, and a good sum of money independent of her father beside.

Y. Fash. 'Sdeath! that my old acquaintance dame Coupler could not have thought of me as well as my brother for such a prize!

Town. Egad, I wouldn't swear that you are too late: his lordship, I know, hasn't yet seen the lady, and, I believe, has quarrelled with his patroness.

Y. Fash. My dear colonel, what an idea have you started!

Town. Pursue it if you can, and I promise you you shall have my assistance; for, besides my natural contempt for his lordship, I have at present the enmity of a rival towards him.

Y. Fash. What, has he been addressing your old flame, the sprightly widow Berinthia?

Town. Faith, Tom, I am at present most whimsically circumstanced—I came here near a month ago to meet the lady you mention; but she failing in her promise, I, partly from pique, and partly from idleness, have been diverting my chagrin by offering up chaste incense to the beauties of Amanda, our friend Loveless's wife.

Y. Fash. I have never seen her, but have heard her spoken of as a youthful wonder of beauty and prudence.

Town. She is so indeed; and Loveless being too careless and insensible of the treasure he possesses, my lodging in the same house has given me a thousand opportunities of making my assiduities acceptable; so that, in less than a fortnight, I began to bear my disappointment from the widow with the most Christian resignation.

Y. Fash. And Berinthia has never appeared?

Town. O there's the perplexity; for, just as I began not to care whether I ever saw her again or not, last night she arrived.

Y. Fash. And instantly reassumed her empire?

Town. No faith—we met—but the lady not condescending to give me any serious reasons for having fool'd me for a month, I left her in a huff.

Y. Fash. Well, well, I'll answer for't she'll soon resume her power, especially as friendship will prevent your pursuing the other too far—But my coxcomb of a brother is an admirer of Amanda's too, is he?

Town. Yes; and I believe is most heartily despised by her—but come with me, and you shall see her and your old friend Loveless.

Y. Fash. I must pay my respects to his lordship—perhaps you can direct me to his lodgings?

Town. Come with me, I shall pass by it.

Y. Fash. I wish you could pay the visit for me; or could tell me what I should say to him.

Town. Say nothing to him—apply yourself to his bag, his sword, his feather, his snuff-box; and, when you are well with them, desire him to lend you a thousand pounds, and I'll engage you prosper.

Y. Fash. 'Sdeath and furies! why was that coxcomb thrust into the world before me? O Fortune! Fortune! thou art a jilt, by gad. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A Dressing Room.

LORD FOPPINGTON, *in his Night Gown, and* LA VAROLE.

Ld Fop. Well, 'tis an unspeakable pleasure to be a man of quality—strike me dumb!—even the boors of this northern spa have learn'd the respect due to a title—La Varole!

La Var. Mi lor—

Ld Fop. You ha'n't yet been at Muddy-moat-hall to announce my arrival, have you?

La Var. Not yet, mi lor.

Ld Fop. Then you need not go till Saturday.—[*Exit* LA VAR.

As I am in no particular haste to view my intended sposa, I shall sacrifice a day or two more to the pursuit of my friend Loveless's wife—Amanda is a charming creature—strike me ugly; and if I have

any discernment in the world, she thinks no less of my Lord Foppington.

Enter LA VAROLE.

La Var. Mi lor, de shoemaker, de tailor, de hosier, de semptress, de peru, be all ready, if your lordship please to dress.

Ld Fop. 'Tis well, admit them.

La Var. Hey, messieurs, entrez!

Enter Tailor, &c. &c.

Ld Fop. So, gentlemen, I hope you have all taken pains to shew yourselves masters in your professions?

Tai. I think I may presume to say, sir—

La Var. My lor, you clown you!

Tai. My lord, I ask your lordship's pardon, my lord. I hope, my lord, your lordship will please to own I have brought your lordship as accomplished a suit of clothes as ever peer of England wore, my lord——will your lordship please to try 'em now?

Ld Fop. Ay; but let my people dispose the glasses so that I may see myself before and behind; for I love to see myself all round.

Whilst he puts on his clothes, enter YOUNG FASHION *and* LORY.

Y. Fash. Hey-day! What the devil have we here? Sure my gentleman's grown a favourite at court, he has got so many people at his levee.

Lory. Sir, these people come in order to make him a favourite at court—they are to establish him with the ladies.

Y. Fash. Good Heaven! to what an ebb of taste are women fallen, that it should be in the power of a laced coat to recommend a gallant to them!

Lory. Sir, tailors and hair-dressers are now become

the bawds of the nation—'tis they that debauch all the women.

Y. Fash. Thou say'st true; for there's that fop, now, has not, by nature, wherewithal to move a cook maid; and by the time these fellows have done with him, egad he shall melt down a countess—But now for my reception.

Ld Fop. Death and eternal tortures! Sir—I say the coat is too wide here by a foot.

Tai. My lord, if it had been tighter, 'twould neither have hook'd nor button'd.

Ld Fop. Rat the hooks and buttons, sir! can any thing be worse than this?—As gad shall judge me, it hangs on my shoulders like a chairman's surtout.

Tai. 'Tis not for me to dispute your lordship's fancy.

Lory. There, sir, observe what respect does.

Y. Fash. Respect!—D—mn him for a coxcomb!—but let's accost him.—Brother, I'm your humble servant.

Ld Fop. O lard, Tam, I did not expect you in England—Brother, I'm glad to see you—but what has brought you to Scarbro', Tam?—Look you, sir, (*To the Tailor.*) I shall never be reconciled to this nauseous wrapping gown; therefore, pray get me another suit with all possible expedition; for this is my eternal aversion.—Well, but Tam, you don't tell me what has driven you to Scarbro'?—Mrs Calico, are not you of my mind?

Semp. Directly, my lord.—I hope your lordship is pleased with your ruffles?

Ld Fop. In love with them, stap my vitals!—Bring my bill, you shall be paid to-morrow.

Semp. I humbly thank your lordship.

[*Exit* SEMP.

Ld Fop. Hark thee, shoemaker, these shoes an't ugly, but they don't fit me.

Shoe. My lord, I think they fit you very well.

Ld Fop. They hurt me just below the instep.

Shoe. (*Feeling his foot.*) No, my lord, they don't hurt you there.

Ld Fop. I tell thee they pinch me execrably.

Shoe. Why then, my lord, if those shoes pinch you I'll be d—'d!

Ld Fop. Why, wilt thou undertake to persuade me I cannot feel?

Shoe. Your lordship may please to feel what you think fit, but that shoe does not hurt you. I think I understand my trade.

Ld Fop. Now, by all that's good and powerful, thou art an incomprehensible coxcomb——but thou makest good shoes, and so I'll bear with thee.

Shoe. My lord, I have worked for half the people of quality in this town these twenty years, and 'tis very hard I shou'dn't know when a shoe hurts, and when it don't.

Ld Fop. Well, pr'ythee be gone about thy business. (*Exit Shoe.* Mr Mendlegs, a word with you. The calves of these stockings are thickened a little too much; they make my legs look like a porter's.

Mend. My lord, methinks they look mighty well.

Ld Fop. Ay, but you are not so good a judge of those things as I am. I have studied them all my life; therefore, pray let the next be the thickness of a crown piece less.

Mend. Indeed, my lord, they are the same kind I had the honour to furnish your lordship with in town.

Ld Fop. Very possible, Mr Mendlegs; but that was in the beginning of the winter; and you should always remember, Mr Hosier, that if you make a nobleman's spring legs as robust as his autumnal calves, you commit a monstrous impropriety, and make no allowance for the fatigues of the winter.

Jew. I hope, my lord, these buckles have had the

unspeakable satisfaction of being honoured with your lordship's approbation?

Ld Fop. Why, they are of a pretty fancy; but don't you think them rather of the smallest?

Jew. My lord, they could not well be larger to keep on your lordship's shoe.

Ld Fop. My good sir, you forget that these matters are not as they used to be formerly; indeed, the buckle was a sort of machine intended to keep on the shoe; but the case is now quite reversed, and the shoe is of no earthly use but to keep on the buckle. Now give me my watches, and the business of the morning will be pretty well over.

Y. Fash. Well, Lory, what dost think on't?——a very friendly reception from a brother, after three years absence!

Lory. Why, sir, 'tis your own fault—here you have stood ever since you came in, and have not commended any one thing that belongs to him.

Y. Fash. Nor ever shall while they belong to a coxcomb.—Now your people of business are gone, brother, I hope I may obtain a quarter of an hour's audience of you?

Ld Fop. Faith, Tam, I must beg you'll excuse me at this time, for I have an engagement which I would not break for the salvation of mankind. Hey there!—is my carriage at the door? You'll excuse me, brother. (*Going.*

Y. Fash. Shall you be back to dinner?

Ld Fop. As gad shall jedge me, I can't tell, for it is passible I may dine with some friends at Donner's.

Y. Fash. Shall I meet you there? for I must needs talk with you.

Ld Fop. That, I'm afraid, mayn't be quite so proper; for those I commonly eat with are a people of nice conversation; and you know, Tam, your education has been a little at large—but there are other ordinaries in town—very good beef ordinaries. I

suppose, Tam, you can eat beef?—However, dear Tam, I'm glad to see thee in England, stap my vitals! [*Exit.*

Y. Fash. Hell and furies! Is this to be borne?

Lory. Faith, sir, I could almost have given him a knock o' the pate myself.

Y. Fash. 'Tis enough; I will now shew you the excess of my passion by being very calm. Come, Lory, lay your loggerhead to mine, and, in cold blood, let us contrive his destruction.

Lory. Here comes a head, sir, would contrive it better than us both, if she would but join in the confederacy.

Y. Fash. By this light, Madam Coupler! she seems dissatisfied at something: let us observe her.

Enter COUPLER.

Coup. Soh! I am likely to be well rewarded for my services, truly; my suspicions, I find, were but too just—What! refuse to advance me a paltry sum, when I am upon the point of making him master of a galloon! But let him look to the consequences, an ungrateful, narrow-minded coxcomb!

Y. Fash. So he is, upon my soul, old lady: it must be my brother you speak of?

Coup. Hah!—stripling, how came you here? What, hast spent all, hey? and art thou come to dun his lordship for assistance?

Y. Fash. No:—I want somebody's assistance to cut his lordship's throat, without the risque of being hang'd for him.

Coup. Egad, sirrah, I could help thee to do him almost as good a turn, without the danger of being burnt in the hand for't.

Y. Fash. How—how, old Mischief?

Coup. Why you must know I have done you the kindness to make up a match for your brother.

Y. Fash. I'm very much beholden to you, truly.

Coup. You may before the wedding-day yet: the

lady is a great heiress, the match is concluded, the writings are drawn, and his lordship is come hither to put the finishing hand to the business.

Y. Fash. I understand as much.

Coup. Now you must know, stripling, your brother's a knave.

Y. Fash. Good.

Coup. He has given me a bond of a thousand pounds for helping him to this fortune, and has promised me as much more in ready money upon the day of the marriage; which, I understand by a friend, he never designs to pay me; and his just now refusing to pay me a part is a proof of it: If, therefore, you will be a generous young rogue, and secure me five thousand pounds, I'll help you to the lady.

Y. Fash. And how the devil wilt thou do that?

Coup. Without the devil's aid, I warrant thee. Thy brother's face not one of the family ever saw; the whole business has been managed by me, and all the letters go through my hands. Sir Tunbelly Clumsy, my relation, (for that's the old gentleman's name) is apprised of his lordship being down here, and expects him to-morrow to receive his daughter's hand; but the peer, I find, means to bait here a few days longer, to recover the fatigue of his journey, I suppose. Now you shall go to Muddy-moat-hall in his place. I'll give you a letter of introduction; and if you don't marry the girl before sun-set, you deserve to be hang'd before morning.

Y. Fash. Agreed, agreed: and for thy reward—

Coup. Well, well; though I warrant thou hast not a farthing of money in thy pocket now—no—one may see it in thy face.

Y. Fash. Not a sous, by Jupiter.

Coup. Must I advance then?—well, be at my lodging next door this evening, and I'll see what may be done—We'll sign and seal, and when I have given

thee some farther instructions, thou shalt hoist sail and be gone. (*Exit* COUP.

Y. Fash. So, Lory; Providence, thou seest, at last takes care of merit: we are in a fair way to be great people.

Lory. Ay, sir, if the devil don't step between the cup and the lip, as he uses to do.

Y. Fash. Why, faith, he has played me many a damned trick to spoil my fortune; and, egad, I'm almost afraid he's at work about it again now; but if I should tell thee how, thou'dst wonder at me.

Lory. Indeed, sir, I should not.

Y. Fash. How dost know?

Lory. Because, sir, I have wondered at you so often, I can wonder at you no more.

Y. Fash. No! what would'st thou say if a qualm of conscience should spoil my design?

Lory. I would eat my words, and wonder more than ever!

Y. Fash. Why faith, Lory, though I am a young rakehell, and have played many a roguish trick, this is so full-grown a cheat, I find I must take pains to come up to't——I have scruples.

Lory. They are strong symptoms of death. If you find they increase, sir, pray make your will.

Y. Fash. No, my conscience sha'n't starve me neither: but thus far I'll listen to it. Before I execute this project, I'll try my brother to the bottom. If he has yet so much humanity about him to assist me (though with a moderate aid) I'll drop my project at his feet, and shew him how I can do for him much more than what I'd ask he'd do for me. This one conclusive trial of him I resolve to make———.

Succeed or fail, still victory's my lot;
If I subdue his heart, 'tis well—if not,
I will subdue my conscience to my plot. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

Enter LOVELESS *and* AMANDA.

Love. How do you like these lodgings, my dear? For my part, I am so well pleased with them, I shall hardly remove whilst we stay here, if you are satisfied.

Aman. I am satisfied with every thing that pleases you, else I had not come to Scarbro' at all.

Love. O! a little of the noise and folly of this place will sweeten the pleasures of our retreat; we shall find the charms of our retirement doubled when we return to it.

Aman. That pleasing prospect will be my chiefest entertainment, whilst, much against my will, I engage in those empty pleasures which 'tis so much the fashion to be fond of.

Love. I own most of them are indeed but empty; yet there are delights, of which a private life is destitute, which may divert an honest man, and be a harmless entertainment to a virtuous woman: good music is one; and truly, (with some small allowance) the plays, I think, may be esteemed another.

Aman. Plays, I must confess, have some small

charms, and would have more, would they restrain that loose encouragement to vice, which shocks, if not the virtue of some women, at least the modesty of all.

Love. But, till that reformation can be wholly made, 'twould surely be a pity to exclude the productions of some of our best writers, for want of a little wholesome pruning; which might be effected by any one who possessed modesty enough to believe that we should preserve all we can of our deceased authors, at least till they are outdone by the living ones.

Aman. What do you think of that you saw last night?

Love. To say truth, I did not mind it much; my attention was for some time taken off to admire the workmanship of Nature, in the face of a young lady who sat some distance from me, she was so exquisitely handsome.

Aman. So exquisitely handsome!

Love. Why do you repeat my words, my dear?

Aman. Because you seemed to speak them with such pleasure, I thought I might oblige you with their echo.

Love. Then you are alarmed, Amanda?

Aman. It is my duty to be so, when you are in danger.

Love. You are too quick in apprehending for me. I viewed her with a world of admiration, but not one glance of love.

Aman. Take heed of trusting to such nice distinctions. But were your eyes the only things that were inquisitive? Had I been in your place, my tongue, I fancy, had been curious too. I should have asked her where she lived, yet still without design—Who was she, pray?

Love. Indeed I cannot tell.

Aman. You will not tell.

Love. By all that's sacred then, I did not ask.

Aman. Nor do you know what company was with her?

Love. I do not; but why are you so earnest?

Aman. I thought I had cause.

Love. But you thought wrong, Amanda; for turn the case, and let it be your story; should you come home and tell me you had seen a handsome man, should I grow jealous because you had eyes?

Aman. But should I tell you he was *exquisitely* so, and that I had gazed on him with admiration, should you not think 'twere possible I might go one step further, and inquire his name?

Love. (*Aside.*) She has reason on her side, I have talked too much; but I must turn off another way. (*To her.*) Will you then make no difference, Amanda, between the language of our sex and yours? There is a modesty restrains your tongues, which makes you speak by halves when you commend, but roving flattery gives a loose to ours, which makes us still speak double what we think. You should not, therefore, in so strict a sense, take what I said to her advantage.

Aman. Those flights of flattery, sir, are to our faces only; when women are once out of hearing, you are as modest in your commendations as we are; but I sha'n't put you to the trouble of farther excuses; —if you please, this business shall rest here, only give me leave to wish, both for your peace and mine, that you may never meet this miracle of beauty more.

Love. I am content.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Madam, there is a lady at the door in a chair, desires to know whether your ladyship sees company? her name is Berinthia.

Aman. O dear!—'tis a relation I have not seen these five years; pray her to walk in. (*Exit Serv.*

Here's another beauty for you; she was, when I saw her last, reckoned extremely handsome.

Love. Don't be jealous now, for I shall gaze upon her too.

Enter BERINTHIA.

Love. (*Aside.*) Ha! by heavens the very woman!

Berin. (*Saluting* AMANDA.) Dear Amanda, I did not expect to meet with you in Scarbro'.

Aman. Sweet cousin, I'm overjoyed to see you. (*To* LOVE.) Mr Loveless, here's a relation and a friend of mine I desire you'll be better acquainted with.

Love. (*Saluting* BERINTHIA.) If my wife never desires a harder thing, madam, her requests will be easily granted.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, my Lord Foppington presents his humble service to you, and desires to know how you do. He's at the next door, and if it be not inconvenient to you, he'll come and wait upon you.

Love. Give my compliments to his lordship, and I shall be glad to see him. (*Exit Serv.*) If you are not acquainted with his lordship, madam, you will be entertained with his character.

Aman. Now it moves my pity more than my mirth, to see a man whom nature has made no fool be so very industrious to pass for an ass.

Love. No, there you are wrong, Amanda; you should never bestow your pity upon those who take pains for your contempt; pity those whom nature abuses, never those who abuse nature.

Enter LORD FOPPINGTON.

Ld Fop. Dear Loveless, I am your most humble servant.

Love. My lord, I'm yours.

Ld Fop. Madam, your ladyship's very humble slave.

Love. My lord, this lady is a relation of my wife's.

Ld Fop. (*Saluting her.*) The beautifullest race of people upon earth, rat me! Dear Loveless, I am overjoyed that you think of continuing here. I am, stap my vitals. (*To* AMANDA.) For Gad's sake, madam, how has your ladyship been able to subsist thus long under the fatigue of a country life?

Aman. My life has been very far from that, my lord, it has been a very quiet one.

Ld Fop. Why that's the fatigue I speak of, madam; for 'tis impossible to be quiet without thinking; now thinking is to me the greatest fatigue in the world.

Aman. Does not your lordship love reading then?

Ld Fop. Oh, passionately, madam, but I never think of what I read.

Berin. Why, can your lordship read without thinking?

Ld Fop. O Lard, can your ladyship pray without devotion, madam?

Aman. Well, I must own, I think books the best entertainment in the world.

Ld Fop. I am so much of your ladyship's mind, madam, that I have a private gallery in town, where I walk sometimes, which is furnished with nothing but books and looking-glasses. Madam, I have gilded them, and ranged them so prettily, before Gad, it is the most entertaining thing in the world to walk and look at them.

Aman. Nay, I love a neat library too, but 'tis, I think, the inside of a book should recommend it most to us.

Ld Fop. That, I must confess, I am not altogether so fand of, far to my mind the inside of a book is to entertain one's self with the forced product of another man's brain. Now, I think a man of quality and breeding may be much more diverted with the natu-

ral sprauts of his own; but, to say the truth, madam, let a man love reading never so well, when once he comes to know the tawn, he finds so many better ways of passing away the four-and-twenty hours, that it were ten thousand pities he should consume his time in that. Far example, madam; now my life, my life, madam, is a perpetual stream of pleasure, that glides through with such a variety of entertainments, I believe the wisest of our ancestors never had the least conception of any of 'em. I rise, madam, when in town, about twelve o'clock. I don't rise sooner, because it is the worst thing in the world for the complexion; nat that I pretend to be a beau, but a man must endeavour to look decent, lest he makes so odious a figure in the side-bax, the ladies should be compelled to turn their eyes upon the play; so, at twelve o'clock, I say, I rise. Naw, if I find it a good day, I resalve to take the exercise of riding, so drink my chocolate, and draw on my boots by two. On my return, I dress; and after dinner, lounge perhaps to the Opera.

Berin. Your lordship, I suppose, is fond of music?

Ld Fop. O, passionately, on Tuesdays and Saturdays, provided there is good company, and one is not expected to undergo the fatigue of listening.

Aman. Does your lordship think that the case at the Opera?

Ld Fop. Most certainly, madam: there is my Lady Tattle, my Lady Prate, my Lady Titter, my Lady Sneer, my Lady Giggle, and my Lady Grin, —these have boxes in the front, and while any favourite air is singing, are the prettiest company in the waurld, stap my vitals! Mayn't we hope for the honour to see you added to our society, madam?

Aman. Alas, my lord, I am the worst company in the world at a concert, I'm so apt to attend to the music.

Ld Fop. Why, madam, that is very pardonable in

the country, or at church; but a monstrous inattention in a polite assembly. But I am afraid I tire the company?

Love. Not at all; pray go on.

Ld Fop. Why then, ladies, there only remains to add, that I generally conclude the evening at one or other of the clubs, nat that I ever play deep; indeed I have been for some time tied up from losing above five thousand paunds at a sitting.

Love. But isn't your lordship sometimes obliged to attend the weighty affairs of the nation?

Ld Fop. Sir, as to weighty affairs, I leave them to weighty heads; I never intend mine shall be a burthen to my body.

Berin. Nay, my lord, but you are a pillar of the state.

Ld Fop. An ornamental pillar, madam; for, sooner than undergo any part of the burthen, rat me, but the whole building should fall to the ground.

Aman. But, my lord, a fine gentleman spends a great deal of his time in his intrigues; you have given us no account of them yet.

Ld Fop. (*Aside.*) Soh! She would inquire into my amours, that's jealousy; poor soul! I see she's in love with me. (*To her.*) Why, madam, I should have mentioned my intrigues, but I am really afraid I begin to be troublesome with the length of my visit.

Aman. Your lordship is too entertaining to grow troublesome any where.

Ld Fop. (*Aside.*) That now was as much as if she had said, pray make love to me. I'll let her see I'm quick of apprehension. (*To her.*) O Lard, madam, I had like to have forgot a secret I must needs tell your ladyship. (*To* Lov.) Ned, you must not be so jealous now as to listen.

Love. Not I, my lord, I am too fashionable a husband to pry into the secrets of my wife.

Ld Fop. (*To* AMAN, *squeezing her hand.*) I am in love with you to desperation, strike me speechless!

Aman. (*Giving him a box o' the ear.*) Then thus I return your passion,—an impudent fool!

Ld Fop. Gad's curse, madam, I'm a peer of the realm.

Love. Hey, what the devil, do you affront my wife, sir? Nay, then—— (*Draws and fight.*

Aman. Ah! What has my folly done?—Help! murder! help! Part them, for Heaven's sake!

Ld Fop. (*Falling back, and leaning on his sword.*) Ah! quite through the body, stap my vitals!

Enter Servants.

Love. (*Running to him.*) I hope I ha'n't killed the fool, however—bear him up—where's your wound?

Ld Fop. Just through the guts.

Love. Call a surgeon, there——unbutton him quickly.

Ld Fop. Ay, pray make haste.

Love. This mischief you may thank yourself for.

Ld Fop. I may so: love's the devil, indeed, Ned.

Enter PROBE *and Servant.*

Serv. Here's Mr Probe, sir, was just going by the door.

Ld Fop. He's the welcomest man alive.

Probe. Stand by, stand by, stand by: pray, gentlemen, stand by; Lord have mercy upon us! did you never see a man run through the body before? Pray, stand by.

Ld Fop. Ah! Mr Probe, I'm a dead man.

Probe. A dead man, and I by! I should laugh to see that, egad.

Love. Pr'ythee, don't stand prating, but look upon his wound.

Probe. Why, what if I won't look upon his wound this hour, sir?

Love. Why then he'll bleed to death, sir.

Probe. Why then I'll fetch him to life again, sir.

Love. 'Slife! he's run through the guts, I tell thee.

Probe. I wish he was run through the heart, and I should get the more credit by his cure.—Now I hope you are satisfied?—Come, now let me come at him—now let me come at him—(*Viewing his wound.*) Oons! what a gash is here!—Why, sir, a man may drive a coach and six horses into your body!

Ld Fop. Oh!

Probe. Why, what the devil, have you run the gentleman through with a scythe?—(*Aside.*) A little scratch between the skin and the ribs, that's all.

Love. Let me see his wound.

Probe. Then you shall dress it, sir—for if any body looks upon it, I won't.

Love. Why thou art the veriest coxcomb I ever saw.

Probe. Sir, I am not master of my trade for nothing.

Ld Fop. Surgeon!

Probe. Sir!

Ld Fop. Are there any hopes?

Probe. Hopes! I can't tell—What are you willing to give for a cure?

Ld Fop. Five hundred paunds with pleasure.

Probe. Why then perhaps there may be hopes; but we must avoid a further delay—here—help the gentleman into a chair, and carry him to my house presently—that's the properest place (*Aside.*) to bubble him out of his money.——Come, a chair—a chair quickly—there, in with him—(*They put him into a chair.*)

Ld Fop. Dear Loveless, adieu: if I die, I forgive thee; and if I live, I hope thou wilt do as much by me. I am sorry you and I should quarrel, but I hope there's an end on't; for, if you are satisfied, I am.

Love. I shall hardly think it worth my prosecuting any farther, so you may be at rest, sir.

Ld Fop. Thou art a generous fellow, strike me dumb!—(*Aside.*) but thou hast an impertinent wife, stap my vitals!

Probe. So—carry him off—carry him off——we shall have him prate himself into a fever by and by—carry him off.

(*Exeunt* LORD FOPPINGTON *and* PROBE.

Aman. Now on my knees, my dear, let me ask your pardon for my indiscretion—my own I never shall obtain.

Love. Oh, there's no harm done—you served him well.

Aman. He did indeed deserve it; but I tremble to think how dear my indiscreet resentment might have cost you.

Love. O, no matter—never trouble yourself about that.

Enter COLONEL TOWNLY.

Town. So, so, I am glad to find you all alive—I met a wounded peer carrying off—for Heaven's sake what was the matter?

Love. O, a trifle—he would have made love to my wife before my face, so she obliged him with a box o' the ear, and I run him through the body, that was all.

Town. Bagatelle on all sides!—But pray, madam, how long has this noble lord been an humble servant of yours?

Aman. This is the first I ever heard on't—so I suppose 'tis his quality more than his love has brought him into this adventure. He thinks his title an authentic passport to every woman's heart below the degree of a peeress.

Town. He's coxcomb enough to think any thing,

but I would not have you brought into trouble for him.—I hope there's no danger of his life?

Love. None at all—he's fallen into the hands of a roguish surgeon, who, I perceive, designs to frighten a little money out of him—but I saw his wound—'tis nothing—he may go to the ball to-night if he pleases.

Town. I am glad you have corrected him without farther mischief, or you might have deprived me of the pleasure of executing a plot against his lordship, which I have been contriving with an old acquaintance of yours.

Love. Explain——

Town. His brother, Tom Fashion, is come down here, and we have it in contemplation to save him the trouble of his intended wedding; but we want your assistance. Tom would have called, but he is preparing for his enterprize, so I promised to bring you to him—so, sir, if these ladies can spare you—

Love. I'll go with you with all my heart—(*Aside.*) though I could wish, methinks, to stay and gaze a little longer on that creature—Good gods! how engaging she is—but what have I to do with beauty? I have already had my portion, and must not covet more—(*To* TOWNLY.) Come, sir, when you please.

Town. Ladies, your servant.

Aman. Mr Loveless, pray one word with you before you go.

Love. (*To* TOWNLY.) I'll overtake you, colonel. (*Exit* TOWNLY.) What would my dear?

Aman. Only a woman's foolish question;—how do you like my cousin, here?

Love. Jealous already, Amanda?

Aman. Not at all—I ask you for another reason.

Love. (*Aside.*) Whate'er her reason be, I must not tell her true. (*To her.*) Why, I confess she's handsome—but you must not think I slight your kinswoman, if I own to you, of all the women who

may claim that character, she is the last would triumph in my heart.

Aman. I am satisfied.

Love. Now tell me why you ask'd?

Aman. At night I will—Adieu.

Love. (*Kissing her.*) I'm yours.— [*Exit.*

Aman. (*Aside.*) I'm glad to find he does not like her, for I have a great mind to persuade her to come and live with me.

Berin. (*Aside.*) Soh! I find my colonel continues in his airs; there must be something more at the bottom of this than the provocation he pretends from me.

Aman. For Heaven's sake, Berinthia, tell me what way I shall take to persuade you to come and live with me?

Berin. Why one way in the world there is—and but one.

Aman. And pray what is that?

Berin. It is to assure me—I shall be very welcome.

Aman. If that be all, you shall e'en sleep here to-night.

Berin. To-night!

Aman. Yes, to-night.

Berin. Why the people where I lodge will think me mad.

Aman. Let 'em think what they please.

Berin. Say you so, Amanda?—Why then they shall think what they please—for I'm a young widow, and I care not what any body thinks.—Ah, Amanda, it's a delicious thing to be a young widow.

Aman. You'll hardly make me think so.

Berin. Puh! because you are in love with your husband—but that is not every woman's case.

Aman. I hope 'twas your's at least.

Berin. Mine, say you?—Now I have a great

mind to tell you a lie, but I shall do it so awkwardly, you'd find me out.

Aman. Then e'en speak the truth.

Berin. Shall I?—then, after all, I did love him, Amanda, as a nun does penance.

Aman. How did you live together?

Berin. Like man and wife—asunder—he loved the country—I the town.—He hawks and hounds—I coaches and equipage.—He eating and drinking—I carding and playing.—He the sound of a horn—I the squeek of a fiddle—We were dull company at table—worse a-bed: whenever we met we gave one another the spleen, and never agreed but once, which was about lying alone.

Aman. But, tell me one thing truly and sincerely—notwithstanding all these jars, did not his death at last extremely trouble you?

Berin. O yes.—I was forced to wear an odious widow's band a twelve-month for't.

Aman. Women, I find, have different inclinations:—prythee, Berinthia, instruct me a little farther—for I'm so great a novice, I'm almost ashamed on't.—Not, Heaven knows, that what you call intrigues have any charms for me—the practical part of all unlawful love is—

Berin. O 'tis abominable—but for the speculative, that we must all confess is entertaining enough.

Aman. Pray, be so just then to me, to believe, 'tis with a world of innocence I would inquire, whether you think those we call women of reputation do really escape all other men, as they do those shadows of beaus?

Berin. O no, Amanda—there are a sort of men make dreadful work amongst 'em—men that may be called the beaus' antipathy—for they agree in nothing but walking upon two legs. These have brains—the beau has none.—These are in love with their mistress—the beau with himself.—They take care of their re-

putation—he's industrious to destroy it.—They are decent—he's a fop.—They are men—he's an ass.

Aman. If this be their character, I fancy we had here e'en now a pattern of 'em both.

Berin. His lordship and Colonel Townly?

Aman. The same.

Berin. As for the lord, he's eminently so; and for the other, I can assure you there's not a man in town who has a better interest with the women, that are worth having an interest with.

Aman. He answers then the opinion I ever had of him—Heavens! what a difference there is between a man like him, and that vain nauseous fop, Lord Foppington!—(*Taking her hand.*) I must acquaint you with the secret, cousin—'tis not that fool alone has talked to me of love—Townly has been tampering too.

Berin. (*Aside.*) So, so—here the mystery comes out!—Colonel Townly!—impossible, my dear!

Aman. 'Tis true, indeed!—though he has done it in vain; nor do I think that all the merit of mankind combined could shake the tender love I bear my husband; yet I will own to you, Berinthia, I did not start at his addresses, as when they came from one whom I contemned.

Berin. (*Aside.*) O this is better and better—well said, innocence!—and you really think, my dear, that nothing could abate your constancy and attachment to your husband?

Aman. Nothing, I am convinced.

Berin. What if you found he loved another woman better?

Aman. Well!

Berin. Well!—why, were I that thing they call a slighted wife, somebody should run the risk of being that thing they call—a husband.

Aman. O fie, Berinthia! no revenge should ever

be taken against a husband—but to wrong his bed is a vengeance which of all vengeance—

Berin. Is the sweetest! ha, ha, ha!—don't I talk madly?

Aman. Madly indeed!

Berin. Yet I'm very innocent.

Aman. That I dare swear you are. I know how to make allowances for your humour; but you resolve then never to marry again?

Berin. O no! I resolve I will.

Aman. How so?

Berin. That I never may.

Aman. You banter me.

Berin. Indeed I don't, but I consider I'm a woman, and form my resolutions accordingly.

Aman. Well, my opinion is, form what resolution you will, matrimony will be the end on't.

Berin. I doubt it—but ah, Heavens!—I have business at home, and am half an hour too late.

Aman. As you are to return with me, I'll just give some orders, and walk with you.

Berin. Well, make haste, and we'll finish this subject as we go. [*Exit* AMANDA.] Ah! poor Amanda, you have led a country life! Well, this discovery is lucky! Base Townly! at once false to me, and treacherous to his friend! and my innocent demure cousin too! I have it in my power to be revenged on her, however. Her husband, if I have any skill in countenance, would be as happy in my smiles as Townly can hope to be in her's. I'll make the experiment, come what will on't. The woman who can forgive the being robb'd of a favour'd lover must be either an idiot or a wanton.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

Enter LORD FOPPINGTON *and* LA VAROLE.

Ld Fop. Hey, fellow, let my vis-a-vis come to the door.

La Var. Will your lordship venture so soon to expose yourself to the weather?

Ld Fop. Sir, I will venture as soon as I can to expose myself to the ladies.

La Var. I wish your lordship would please to keep house a little longer; I'm afraid your honour does not well consider your wound.

Ld Fop. My wound! I would not be in eclipse another day, though I had as many wounds in my body as I have had in my heart. So mind, Varole, let these cards be left as directed. For this evening I shall wait on my father-in-law, Sir Tunbelly, and I mean to commence my devoirs to the lady, by giving an entertainment at her father's expence; and, hark thee, tell Mr Loveless I request he and his company will honour me with their presence, or I shall think we are not friends.

La Var. I will be sure. [*Exit.*

Enter YOUNG FASHION.

Y. Fash. Brother, your servant, how do you find yourself to-day?

Ld Fop. So well, that I have ordered my coach to the door; so there's no danger of death this baut, Tam.

Y. Fash. I'm very glad of it.

Ld Fop. (*Aside.*) That I believe's a lie.—Pr'ythee, Tam, tell me one thing, did your heart cut a caper up to your mauth, when you heard I was ran through the bady?

Y. Fash. Why do you think it should?

Ld Fop. Because I remember mine did so when I heard my uncle was shot through the head.

Y. Fash. It then did very ill.

Ld Fop. Pr'ythee, why so?

Y. Fash. Because he used you very well.

Ld Fop. Well!—Naw, strike me dumb, he starved me—he has let me want a thausand women for want of a thausand paund.

Y. Fash. Then he hindered you from making a great many ill bargains; for I think no woman worth money that will take money.

Ld Fop. If I was a younger brother, I should think so too.

Y. Fash. Then you are seldom much in love?

Ld Fop. Never, stap my vitals.

Y. Fash. Why then did you make all this bustle about Amanda?

Ld Fop. Because she was a woman of an insolent virtue, and I thought myself piqued in honour to debauch her.

Y. Fash. (*Aside.*) Very well. Here's a rare fellow for you to have the spending of five thousand pounds a year! But now for my business with him.—Brother, though I know to talk of business (especially of money) is a theme not quite so entertain-

ing to you as that of the ladies, my necessities are such, I hope you'll have patience to hear me.

Ld Fop. The greatness of your necessities, Tam, is the worst argument in the warld for your being patiently heard. I do believe you are going to make a very good speech, but, strike me dumb, it has the worst beginning of any speech I have heard this twelvemonth.

Y. Fash. I'm sorry you think so.

Ld Fop. I do believe thou art—but come, let's know the affair quickly.

Y. Fash. Why then, my case in a word is this—The necessary expences of my travels have so much exceeded the wretched income of my annuity, that I have been forced to mortgage it for five hundred pounds, which is spent; so, unless you are so kind as to assist me in redeeming it, I know no remedy but to take a purse.

Ld Fop. Why, faith, Tam, to give you my sense of the thing, I do think taking a purse the best remedy in the warld; for if you succeed you are relieved that way, if you are taken—you are relieved t' other.

Y. Fash. I'm glad to see you are in so pleasant a humour; I hope I shall find the effects on't.

Ld Fop. Why, do you really then think it a reasonable thing that I should give you five hundred paunds?

Y. Fash. I do not ask it as a due, brother, I am willing to receive it as a favour.

Ld Fop. Then thou art willing to receive it any how, strike me speechless.—But these are d—ned times to give money in; taxes are so great, repairs so exorbitant, tenants such rogues, and bouquets so dear, that, the devil take me, I am reduced to that extremity in my cash, I have been forced to retrench in that one article of sweet pawder, till I have brought

it dawn to five guineas a maunth—now judge, Tam, whether I can spare you five hundred paunds?

Y. Fash. If you can't I must starve, that's all. (*Aside.*) Damn him!

Ld Fop. All I can say is, you should have been a better husband.

Y. Fash. Ouns!—If you can't live upon ten thousand a year, how do you think I could do't upon two hundred?

Ld Fop. Don't be in a passion, Tam, for passion is the most unbecoming thing in the warld—to the face—Look you, I don't love to say any thing to you to make you melancholy, but upon this occasion I must take leave to put you in mind, that a running horse does require more attendance than a coach horse.—Nature has made some difference 'twixt you and me.

Y. Fash. She has made you older. (*Aside.*) Plague take her!

Ld Fop. That is not all, Tam.

Y. Fash. Why, what is there else?

Ld Fop. (*Looking first upon himself and then upon his brother.*) Ask the ladies.

Y. Fash. Why, thou essence-bottle, thou musk-cat,—dost thou then think thou hast any advantage over me but what fortune has given thee?

Ld Fop. I do, stap my vitals!

Y. Fash. Now, by all that's great and powerful, thou art the prince of coxcombs.

Ld Fop. Sir, I am proud at being at the head of so prevailing a party.

Y. Fash. Will nothing then provoke thee?—Draw, coward!

Ld Fop. Look you, Tam, you know I have always taken you for a mighty dull fellow; and here is one of the foolishest plats broke out that I have seen a lang time. Your poverty makes life so burthensome to you, you would provoke me to a quarrel, in hopes

either to slip through my lungs into my estate, or to get yourself run through the guts, to put an end to your pain; but I will disappoint you in both your designs; far, with the temper of a philasapher, and the discretion of a statesman—I shall leave the room with my sword in the scabbard. (*Exit.*

Y. Fash. So! farewell, brother; and now, Conscience, I defy thee.——Lory!

Enter LORY.

Lory. Sir?

Y. Fash. Here's rare news, Lory; his lordship has given me a pill has purged off all my scruples.

Lory. Then my heart's at ease again; for I have been in a lamentable fright, sir, ever since your conscience had the impudence to intrude into your company.

Y. Fash. Be at peace; it will come there no more; my brother has given it a wring by the nose, and I have kicked it down stairs. So run away to the inn, get the chaise ready quickly, and bring it to Dame Coupler's without a moment's delay.

Lory. Then, sir, you are going straight about the fortune?

Y. Fash. I am.—Away—fly, Lory.

Lory. The happiest day I ever saw. I'm upon the wing already. (*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

A Garden.

Enter LOVELESS *and Servant.*

Love. Is my wife within?

Serv. No, sir, she has been gone out this half hour.

Love. Well, leave me. [*Exit Servant.*] How strangely does my mind run on this widow—never was my heart so suddenly seized on before—that my wife should pick out her, of all woman-kind, to be her play-fellow!—But what fate does let fate answer for—I sought it not—soh!—by heavens! here she comes.

Enter BERINTHIA.

Berin. What makes you look so thoughtful, sir? I hope you are not ill?

Love. I was debating, madam, whether I was so or not; and that was it which made me look so thoughtful.

Berin. Is it then so hard a matter to decide? I thought all people were acquainted with their own bodies, though few people know their own minds.

Love. What if the distemper I suspect be in the mind?

Berin. Why then I'll undertake to prescribe you a cure.

Love. Alas! you undertake you know not what.

Berin. So far at least then you allow me to be a physician?

Love. Nay, I'll allow you to be so yet farther; for I have reason to believe, should I put myself into your hands, you would increase my distemper.

Berin. How?

Love. Oh, you might betray my complaints to my wife.

Berin. And so lose all my practice.

Love. Will you then keep my secret?

Berin. I will.

Love. I'm satisfied. Now hear my symptoms, and give me your advice. The first were these; when I saw you at the play, a random glance you threw at first alarmed me. I could not turn my eyes from whence the danger came—I gazed upon you till my heart began to pant——nay, even now, on your approaching me, my illness is so increased, that if you do not help me, I shall, whilst you look on, consume to ashes. (*Taking her hand.*

Berin. (*Breaking from him.*) O Lord, let me go, 'tis the plague, and we shall be infected!

Love. Then we'll die together, my charming angel.

Berin. O Gad! the devil's in you! Lord, let me go—here's somebody coming!

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, my lady's come home, and desires to speak with you.

Love. Tell her I'm coming. (*Exit Servant.* (*To* BERINTHIA.) But before I go, one glass of nectar to drink her health.

Berin. Stand off, or I shall hate you, by heavens!

Love. (*Kissing her.*) In matters of love, a woman's oath is no more to be minded than a man's.

(*Exit* LOVE.

Berin. Um!

Enter TOWNLY.

Town. Soh! what's here?—Berinthia and Loveless,

—and in close conversation!—I cannot now wonder at her indifference in excusing herself to me!—O, rare woman!—Well then, let Loveless look to his wife, 'twill be but the retort courteous on both sides. (*To* BERINTHIA.) Your servant, madam, I need not ask you how you do, you have got so good a colour.

Berin. No better than I used to have, I suppose.

Town. A little more blood in your cheeks.

Berin. I have been walking.

Town. Is that all? Pray was it Mr Loveless went from here just now?

Berin. O yes; he has been walking with me.

Town. He has!

Berin. Upon my word, I think he is a very agreeable man; and there is certainly something particularly insinuating in his address!

Town. So, so! she hasn't even the modesty to dissemble! Pray, madam, may I, without impertinence, trouble you with a few serious questions?

Berin. As many as you please; but pray let them be as little serious as possible.

Town. Is it not near two years since I presumed to address you?

Berin. I don't know exactly; but it has been a tedious long time.

Town. Have I not, during that period, had every reason to believe that my assiduities were far from being unacceptable?

Berin. Why, to do you justice, you have been extremely troublesome; and I confess I have been more civil to you than you deserved.

Town. Did I not come to this place at your express desire? and for no purpose but the honour of meeting you? and, after wasting a month in disappointment, have you condescended to explain, or in the slightest way apologize for your conduct?

Berin. O heavens! apologize for my conduct!—apologize to you!—O, you barbarian!—But, pray

now, my good serious colonel, have you any thing more to add?

Town. Nothing, madam, but that, after such behaviour, I am less surprised at what I saw just now; it is not very wonderful that the woman who can trifle with the delicate addresses of an honourable lover, should be found coquetting with the husband of her friend.

Berin. Very true—no more wonderful than it was for this *honourable* lover to divert himself, in the absence of this coquet, with endeavouring to seduce his friend's wife! O colonel, colonel, don't talk of honour or your friend, for heaven's sake!

Town. 'Sdeath! how came she to suspect this?—Really, madam, I don't understand you.

Berin. Nay—nay—you saw I did not pretend to misunderstand you.—But here comes the lady—perhaps you would be glad to be left with her for an explanation.

Town. O, madam, this recrimination is a poor resource; and, to convince you how much you are mistaken, I beg leave to decline the happiness you propose me.—Madam, your servant.

Enter AMANDA. (TOWNLY *whispers* AMANDA, *and exit.*)

Berin. He carries it off well, however—upon my word—very well!—how tenderly they part!—So, cousin,—I hope you have not been chiding your admirer for being with me. I assure you we have been talking of you.

Aman. Fie, Berinthia!—my admirer!—will you never learn to talk in earnest of any thing?

Berin. Why, this shall be in earnest, if you please; for my part I only tell you matter of fact.

Aman. I'm sure there's so much jest and earnest in what you say to me on this subject, I scarcely know how to take it. I have just parted with Mr Loveless

Perhaps it is my fancy; but I think there is an alteration in his manner, which alarms me.

Berin. And so you are jealous? is that all?

Aman. That all!—is jealousy then nothing?

Berin. It should be nothing, if I were in your case.

Aman. Why what would you do?

Berin. I'd cure myself.

Aman. How?

Berin. Care as little for my husband as he did for me. Look you, Amanda, you may build castles in the air, and fume and fret, and grow thin and lean, and pale, and ugly, if you please; but I tell you, no man worth having is true to his wife, or ever was, or ever will be so.

Aman. Do you then really think he's false to me? for I did not suspect him.

Berin. Think so!—I am sure of it.

Aman. You are sure on't?

Berin. Positively—he fell in love at the play.

Aman. Right—the very same—but who could have told you this?

Berin. Um—O—Townly!—I suppose your husband has made him his confidant.

Aman. O base Loveless!—and what did Townly say on't?

Berin. So, so—why should she ask that?—(*Aside*)—Say!—why, he abused Loveless extremely, and said all the tender things of you in the world.

Aman. Did he?—Oh! my heart—I'm very ill.—I must go to my chamber—dear Berinthia, don't leave me a moment. [*Exit.*

Berin. No;—don't fear.—So!—there is certainly some affection on her side, at least, towards Townly. If it prove so, and her agreeable husband perseveres—Heaven send me resolution!—Well—how this business will end I know not; but I seem to be in as fair a way to lose my gallant colonel, as a boy is to be a rogue when he's put clerk to an attorney. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Country House.

Enter YOUNG FASHION *and* LORY.

Y. Fash. So—here's our inheritance, Lory, if we can but get into possession—but methinks the seat of our family looks like Noah's ark, as if the chief part on't were designed for the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field.

Lory. Pray, sir, don't let your head run upon the orders of building here—get but the heiress, let the devil take the house.

Y. Fash. Get but the house! let the devil take the heiress, I say—but come, we have no time to squander, knock at the door—

[LORY *knocks two or three times.*

What the devil, have they got no ears in this house? —knock harder.

Lory. Egad, sir, this will prove some enchanted castle—we shall have the giant come out by and by with his club, and beat our brains out. (*Knocks again.*

Y. Fash. Hush—they come—(*From within.*) Who is there?

Lory. Open the door and see—is that your country breeding?

Serv. (*Within.*) Ay, but two words to that bargain —Tummas, is the blunderbuss primed?

Y. Fash. Ouns! give 'em good words, Lory, or we shall be shot here a fortune-catching!

Lory. Egad, sir, I think you're in the right on't— ho!—Mr What-d'ye-callum—will you please to let us

in? or are we to be left here to grow like willows by your moat side?

(*Servant appears at the window with a blunderbuss.*)

Serv. Weel naw, what's ya're business?

Y. Fash. Nothing, sir, but to wait upon Sir Tunbelly, with your leave.

Serv. To weat upon Sir Tunbelly!—why you'll find that's just as Sir Tunbelly pleases.

Y. Fash. But will you do me the favour, sir, to know whether Sir Tunbelly pleases or not?

Serv. Why look you, d'ye see, with good words much may be done.—Ralph, go thy waes, and ask Sir Tunbelly if he pleases to be waited upon—and, dost hear? call to nurse that she may lock up Miss Hoyden before the geat's open.

Y. Fash. D'ye hear that, Lory?

Enter SIR TUNBELLY, *with Servants, armed with guns, clubs, pitchforks, &c.*

Lory (*Running behind his master.*) O Lord, O, O Lord, Lord, we are both dead men!

Y. Fash. Take heed, fool,—thy fear will ruin us.

Lory. My fear, sir! 'sdeath, sir! I fear nothing!—(*Aside*) Would I were well up to the chin in a horse-pond!

Sir Tun. Who is it here has any business with me?

Y. Fash. Sir, 'tis I, if your name be Sir Tunbelly Clumsy?

Sir Tun. Sir, my name is Sir Tunbelly Clumsy, whether you have any business with me or not—so you see I am not ashamed of my name, nor my face either.

Y. Fash. Sir, you have no cause that I know of.

Sir Tun. Sir, if you have no cause either, I desire to know who you are; for 'till I know your name, I sha'n't ask you to come into my house: and when I do know your name, 'tis six to four I don't ask you then.

Y. Fash. (*Giving him a letter.*) Sir, I hope you'll find this letter an authentic passport.

Sir Tun. God's my life, from Mrs Coupler!—I ask your lordship's pardon ten thousand times—(*To his Servant*)—Here, run in a doors quickly; get a Scotch coal fire in the great parlour—set all the Turkey-work chairs in their places; get the brass candlesticks out, and be sure stick the socket full of laurel, run—(*Turning to* YOUNG FASHION.) My lord, I ask your lordship's pardon—(*To Servant.*) and, do you hear? run away to nurse, bid her let Miss Hoyden loose again. [*Exit Servant.*

(*To* YOUNG FASHION.) I hope your honour will excuse the disorder of my family—we are not used to receive men of your lordship's great quality every day—Pray where are your coaches and servants, my lord?

Y. Fash. Sir, that I might give you and your daughter a proof how impatient I am to be nearer akin to you, I left my equipage to follow me, and came away post with only one servant.

Sir Tun. Your lordship does me too much honour——It was exposing your person to too much fatigue and danger, I protest it was——but my daughter shall endeavour to make you what amends she can—and, though I say it that should not say it, Hoyden has charms.

Y. Fash. Sir, I am not a stranger to them, though I am to her: common fame has done her justice.

Sir Tun. My lord, I am common fame's very grateful humble servant.—My lord, my girl's young—Hoyden is young, my lord; but this I must say for her, what she wants in art she has by nature,—what she wants in experience she has in breeding—and what's wanting in her age is made good in her constitution—so pray, my lord, walk in, pray, my lord, walk in.

Y. Fash. Sir, I wait upon you.

[*Exeunt through the gate.*

MISS HOYDEN *sola.*

Miss Hoy. Sure, nobody was ever used as I am. I know well enough what other girls do, for all they think to make a fool of me. It's well I have a husband a coming, or I'cod I'd marry the baker, I would so.—Nobody can knock at the gate, but presently I must be lock'd up—and here's the young greyhound can run loose about the house all the day long, so she can.—Tis very well— (*Nurse without opening the door.*)

Nurse. Miss Hoyden, Miss, Miss, Miss, Miss Hoyden!

Enter Nurse.

Miss Hoy. Well, what do you make such a noise for, ha?—what do you din a body's ears for?—can't one be at quiet for you?

Nurse. What do I din your ears for!—here's one come will din your ears for you.

Miss Hoy. What care I who's come?—I care not a fig who comes, nor who goes, as long as I must be lock'd up like the ale-cellar.

Nurse. That, Miss, is for fear you should be drank before you are ripe.

Miss Hoy. O don't you trouble your head about that, I'm as ripe as you, though not so mellow.

Nurse. Very well—now I have a good mind to lock you up again, and not let you see my lord to-night.

Miss Hoy. My lord! why is my husband come?

Nurse. Yes, marry is he, and a goodly person too.

Miss Hoy. (*Hugging Nurse.*) O, my dear nurse, forgive me this once, and I'll never misuse you again; no, if I do, you shall give me three thumps on the back and a great pinch by the cheek.

Nurse. Ah! the poor thing, see how it melts! it's as full of good-nature as an egg's full of meat.

Miss Hoy. But, my dear nurse, don't lie now; is he come by your troth?

Nurse. Yes, by my truly is he.

Miss Hoy. O Lord! I'll go and put on my laced tucker, though I'm lock'd up a month for't.

[*Exit running.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

Enter Miss Hoyden *and Nurse.*

Nurse. Well, Miss, how do you like your husband that is to be?

Miss Hoy. O Lord, nurse, I'm so overjoy'd, I can scarce contain myself.

Nurse. O but you must have a care of being too fond, for men now-a-days hate a woman that loves 'em.

Miss Hoy. Love him! why do you think I love him, nurse? I'cod, I would not care he was hang'd, so I were but once married to him.—No, that which pleases me, is to think what work I'll make when I get to London; for when I am a wife and a lady both, I'cod I'll flaunt it with the best of 'em. Ay, and I shall have money enough to do so too, nurse.

Nurse. Ah! there's no knowing that, Miss; for, though these lords have a power of wealth indeed, yet, as I have heard say, they give it all to their sluts

and their trulls, who joggle it about in their coaches, with a murrain to 'em, whilst poor madam sits sighing and wishing, and has not a spare half-crown to buy her a Practice of Piety.

Miss Hoy. O, but for that, don't deceive yourself, nurse, for this I must say of my lord, he's as free as an open house at Christmas. For this very morning he told me I should have six hundred a year to buy pins. Now, nurse, if he gives me six hundred a year to buy pins, what do you think he'll give me to buy fine petticoats?

Nurse. Ah, my dearest, he deceives thee foully, and he's no better than a rogue for his pains. These Londoners have got a gibberage with 'em would confound a gipsey. That which they call pin-money is to buy their wives every thing in the versal world, down to their very shoe-knots—Nay, I have heard folks say, that some ladies, if they will have gallants, as they call 'em, are forced to find them out of their pin-money too. But, look, look, if his honour be not coming to you.—Now, if I were sure you would behave yourself handsomely, and not disgrace me that have brought you up, I'd leave you alone together.

Miss Hoy. That's my best nurse, do as you'd be done by—trust us together this once, and if I don't shew my breeding, may I never be married, but die an old maid.

Nurse. Well, this once I'll venture you.—But if you disparage me—

Miss Hoy. Never fear. [*Exit Nurse.*

Enter YOUNG FASHION.

Y. Fash. Your servant, madam; I'm glad to find you alone, for I have something of importance to speak to you about.

Miss Hoy. Sir, (my lord I meant) you may speak to me about what you please, I shall give you a civil answer.

Y. Fash. You give me so obliging a one, it encourages me to tell you in a few words what I think both for your interest and mine. Your father, I suppose you know, has resolved to make me happy in being your husband, and I hope I may depend on your consent to perform what he desires.

Miss Hoy. Sir, I never disobey my father in any thing but eating green gooseberries.

Y. Fash. So good a daughter must needs be an admirable wife—I am therefore impatient till you are mine, and hope you will so far consider the violence of my love, that you won't have the cruelty to defer my happiness so long as your father designs it.

Miss Hoy. Pray, my lord, how long is that?

Y. Fash. Madam—a thousand years—a whole week.

Miss Hoy. A week!—Why I shall be an old woman by that time.

Y. Fash. And I an old man.

Miss Hoy. Why I thought it was to be to-morrow morning, as soon as I was up. I'm sure nurse told me so.

Y. Fash. And it shall be to-morrow morning, if you'll consent.

Miss Hoy. If I'll consent! Why I thought I was to obey you as my husband?

Y. Fash. That's when we are married; till then I'm to obey you.

Miss Hoy. Why then if we are to take it by turns, it's the same thing—I'll obey you now, and when we are married you shall obey me.

Y. Fash. With all my heart. But I doubt we must get nurse on our side, or we shall hardly prevail with the chaplain.

Miss Hoy. No more we sha'n't indeed, for he loves her better than he loves his pulpit, and would always be a preaching to her by his good-will.

Y. Fash. Why then, my dear, if you'll call her hither, we'll try to persuade her presently.

Miss Hoy. O Lord, I can tell you a way how to persuade her to any thing.

Y. Fash. How's that?

Miss Hoy. Why tell her she's a handsome, comely woman, and give her half-a-crown.

Y. Fash. Nay, if that will do, she shall have half a score of them.

Miss Hoy. O Gemini, for half that she'd marry you herself.—I'll run and call her. [*Exit.*

Y. Fash. So, matters go swimmingly. This is a rare girl, i'faith. I shall have a fine time on't with her at London. But no matter—she brings me an estate will afford me a separate maintenance.

Enter LORY.

Y. Fash. So, Lory, what's the matter?

Lory. Here, sir; an intercepted packet from the enemy—your brother's postillion brought it—I knew the livery, pretended to be a servant of Sir Tunbelly's, and so got possession of the letter.

Y. Fash. (*Looking at it.*) Ouns!—He tells Sir Tunbelly here that he will be with him this evening, with a large party to supper—'Egad! I must marry the girl directly.

Lory. O zounds, sir, directly to be sure! Here she comes. [*Exit* LORY.

Y. Fash. And the old Jezabel with her. She has a thorough procuring countenance however.

Enter MISS HOYDEN *and Nurse.*

Y. Fash. How do you do, Mrs Nurse?—I desired your young lady would give me leave to see you, that I might thank you for your extraordinary care and conduct in her education; pray accept of this small acknowledgement for it at present, and depend upon

my farther kindness when I shall be that happy thing her husband.

Nurse. (*Aside.*) Gold, by Maakins!—Your honour's goodness is too great. Alas! all I can boast of is, I gave her pure milk, and so your honour would have said, an you had seen how the poor thing thrived—and how it would look up in my face—and crow and laugh it would.

Miss Hoy. (*To Nurse, taking her angrily aside.*) Pray one word with you. Pr'ythee, nurse, don't stand ripping up old stories, to make one ashamed before one's love; do you think such a fine proper gentleman as he is cares for a fiddle-come tale of a child? If you have a mind to make him have a good opinion of a woman, don't tell him what one did then, tell him what one can do now. (*To him.*) I hope your honour will excuse my mis-manners to whisper before you, it was only to give some orders about the family.

Y. Fash. O every thing, madam, is to give way to business; besides, good housewifery is a very commendable quality in a young lady.

Miss Hoy. Pray, sir, are young ladies good housewives at London town? Do they darn their own linen?

Y. Fash. O no;—they study how to spend money, not to save.

Miss Hoy. I'cod, I don't know but that may be better sport, ha, nurse?

Y. Fash. Well, you shall have your choice when you come there.

Miss Hoy. Shall I?—then by my troth I'll get there as fast as I can. (*To Nurse.*) His honour desires you'll be so kind as to let us be married to-morrow.

Nurse. To-morrow, my dear madam!

Y. Fash. Ay faith, nurse, you may well be surprised at Miss's wanting to put it off so long—to-mor-

row! no, no,—'tis now, this very hour, I would have the ceremony perform'd.

Miss Hoy. I'cod with all my heart.

Nurse. O mercy! worse and worse.

Y. Fash. Yes, sweet nurse, now, and privately. For all things being signed and sealed, why should Sir Tunbelly make us stay a week for a wedding dinner?

Nurse. But if you should be married now, what will you do when Sir Tunbelly calls for you to be wedded?

Miss Hoy. Why then we will be married again.

Nurse. What! twice, my child?

Miss Hoy. I'cod, I don't care how often I'm married, not I.

Nurse. Well—I'm such a tender-hearted fool, I find I can refuse you nothing; so you shall e'en follow your own inventions.

Miss Hoy. Shall I?—(*Aside.*) O Lord, I could leap over the moon!

Y. Fash. Dear nurse, this goodness of your's sha'n't go unrewarded. But now you must employ your power with the chaplain, that he may do his friendly office too, and then we shall be all happy. Do you think you can prevail with him?

Nurse. Prevail with him!—or he shall never prevail with me, I can tell him that.

Y. Fash. I'm glad to hear it: however, to strengthen your interest with him, you may let him know I have several fat livings in my gift, and that the first that falls shall be in your disposal.

Nurse. Nay then, I'll make him marry more folks than one, I'll promise him.

Miss Hoy. Faith do, nurse, make him marry you too, I'm sure he'll do't for a fat living.

Y. Fash. Well, nurse, while you go and settle matters with him, your lady and I will go and take a walk in the garden. [*Exit Nurse.*

Y. Fash. (*Giving her his hand.*) Come, madam, dare you venture yourself alone with me?

Miss. O dear, yes, sir, I don't think you'll do any thing to me I need be afraid on. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter AMANDA, *her Woman following.*

Maid. If you please, madam, only to say whether you'll have me buy them or not?

Aman. Yes—no—go—teazer! I care not what you do—pr'ythee leave me. (*Exit Maid.*

Enter BERINTHIA.

Berin. What in the name of Jove's the matter with you?

Aman. The matter, Berinthia? I'm almost mad; I'm plagued to death.

Berin. Who is it that plagues you?

Aman. Who do you think should plague a wife but her husband?

Berin. O ho! is it come to that?—we shall have you wish yourself a widow by and bye.

Aman. Would I were any thing but what I am!—a base ungrateful man, to use me thus!

Berin. What, has he given you fresh reasons to suspect his wandering?

Aman. Every hour gives me reason.

Berin. And yet, Amanda, you perhaps at this moment cause in another's breast the same tormenting doubts and jealousies which you feel so sensibly yourself.

Aman. Heaven knows I would not!

Berin. Why, you can't tell but there may be some

one as tenderly attached to Townly, whom you boast of as your conquest, as you can be to your husband.

Aman. I'm sure I never encouraged his pretensions.

Berin. Pshaw! pshaw!—no sensible man ever perseveres to love without encouragement. Why have you not treated him as you have Lord Foppington?

Aman. Because he has not presumed so far. But let us drop the subject. Men, not women, are riddles. Mr Loveless now follows some flirt for variety, whom I'm sure he does not like so well as he does me.

Berin. That's more than you know, madam.

Aman. Why, do you know the ugly thing?

Berin. I think I can guess at the person—but she's no such ugly thing neither.

Aman. Is she very handsome?

Berin. Truly I think so.

Aman. Whate'er she be, I'm sure he does not like her well enough to bestow any thing more than a little outward gallantry upon her.

Berin. (*Aside.*) Outward gallantry!—I can't bear this—Come, come, don't you be too secure, Amanda; while you suffer Townly to imagine that you do not detest him for his designs on you, you have no right to complain that your husband is engaged elsewhere. But here comes the person we were speaking of.

Enter TOWNLY.

Town. Ladies, as I come uninvited, I beg, if I intrude, you will use the same freedom in turning me out again.

Aman. I believe, sir, it is near the time Mr Loveless said he would be at home. He talked of accepting of Lord Foppington's invitation to sup at Sir Tunbelly Clumsy's.

Town. His lordship has done me the honour to in-

vite me also. If you'll let me escort you, I'll let you into a mystery as we go, in which you must play a part when we arrive.

Aman. But we have two hours yet to spare—the carriages are not ordered till eight, and it is not a five minutes drive. So, cousin, let us keep the colonel to play piquet with us, till Mr Loveless comes home.

Berin. As you please, madam, but you know I have a letter to write.

Town. Madam, you know you may command me, though I'm a very wretched gamester.

Aman. O, you play well enough to lose your money, and that's all the ladies require—and so, without any more ceremony, let us go into the next room, and call for cards and candles. (*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

BERINTHIA'S *Dressing-Room.*

Enter LOVELESS.

Love. So—thus far all's well—I have got into her dressing-room, and it being dusk, I think nobody has perceived me steal into the house. I heard Berinthia tell my wife she had some particular letters to write this evening, before we went to Sir Tunbelly's, and here are the implements for correspondence—How shall I muster up assurance to shew myself when she comes?—I think she has given me encouragement—and, to do my impudence justice, I have made the most of it.—I hear a door open, and some one com-

ing; if it should be my wife, what the devil should I say?—I believe she mistrusts me, and, by my life, I don't deserve her tenderness; however, I am determined to reform, though not yet. Hah!—Berinthia—so I'll step in here till I see what sort of humour she is in. (*Goes into the closet.*

Enter BERINTHIA.

Berin. Was ever so provoking a situation!—To think I should sit and hear him compliment Amanda to my face!—I have lost all patience with them both. I would not for something have Loveless know what temper of mind they have piqued me into, yet I can't bear to leave them together. No—I'll put my papers away, and return to disappoint them. (*Goes to the closet.*) O Lord! a ghost! a ghost! a ghost!

Enter LOVELESS.

Love. Peace, my angel!—'tis no ghost—but one worth a hundred spirits.

Berin. How, sir, have you had the insolence to presume to—run in again, here's somebody coming.

Enter Maid.

Maid. O Lord, ma'am, what's the matter?

Berin. O, Heavens, I'm almost frightened out of my wits!—I thought verily I had seen a ghost, and 'twas nothing but a black hood pinned against the wall. —You may go again, I am the fearfullest fool! (*Exit Maid.*

Re-enter LOVELESS.

Love. Is the coast clear?

Berin. The coast clear!—Upon my word I wonder at your assurance.

Love. Why then you wonder before I have given you a proof of it. But where's my wife?

Berin. At cards.

Love. With whom?

Berin. With Townly.

Love. Then we are safe enough.

Berin. You are so!—Some husbands would be of another mind were he at cards with their wives.

Love. And they'd be in the right on't too—but I dare trust mine.

Berin. Indeed!—And she, I doubt not, has the same confidence in you. Yet do you think she'd be content to come and find you here?

Love. 'Egad, as you say, that's true—then, for fear she should come, hadn't we better go into the next room out of her way?

Berin. What—in the dark?

Love. Ay—or with a light, which you please.

Berin. You are certainly very impudent.

Love. Nay then—let me conduct you, my angel.

Berin. Hold, hold, you are mistaken in your angel, I assure you.

Love. I hope not, for by this hand I swear—

Berin. Come, come, let go my hand or I shall hate you; I'll cry out as I live.

Love. Impossible!—you cannot be so cruel.

Berin. Ha!—here's some one coming—be gone instantly.

Love. Will you promise to return if I remain here?

Berin. Never trust myself in a room with you again while I live.

Love. But I have something particular to communicate to you.

Berin. Well, well, before we go to Sir Tunbelly's I'll walk upon the lawn. If you are fond of a moonlight evening, you will find me there.

Love. I'faith, they're coming here now.—I take you at your word. (*Exit* LOVELESS *into the closet.*

Berin. 'Tis Amanda, as I live—I hope she has not heard his voice. Though I mean she should have her share of jealousy in turn.

Enter AMANDA.

Aman. Berinthia, why did you leave me?

Berin. I thought I only spoiled your party.

Aman. Since you have been gone, Townly has attempted to renew his importunities——I must break with him—for I cannot venture to acquaint Mr Loveless with his conduct.

Berin. O no—Mr Loveless mustn't know of it by any means.

Aman. O not for the world—I wish, Berinthia, you would undertake to speak to Townly on the subject.

Berin. Upon my word it would be a very pleasant subject for me to talk to him on—But come—let us go back, and you may depend on't I'll not leave you together again if I can help it. (*Exeunt.*

Enter LOVELESS.

Love. So—so!—a pretty piece of business I have overheard—Townly makes love to my wife—and I'm not to know it for the world—I must inquire into this—and, by Heaven, if I find that Amanda has in the smallest degree——Yet what have I been at here?—O, 'sdeath! that's no rule.

That wife alone unsullied credit wins,
Whose virtues can atone her husband's sins;
Thus while the man has other nymphs in view,
It suits the woman to be doubly true. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

A Garden—Moon-light.

Enter LOVELESS.

Love. Now, does she mean to make a fool of me or not?—I sha'n't wait much longer, for my wife will soon be inquiring for me to set out on our supping party—Suspence is at all times the devil—but of all modes of suspence, the watching for a loitering mistress is the worst—but let me accuse her no longer—she approaches with one smile to overpay the anxiety of a year.

Enter BERINTHIA.

O, Berinthia, what a world of kindness are you in my debt!—had you stayed five minutes longer——

Berin. You would have been gone, I suppose.

Love. (*Aside.*) Egad she's right enough.

Berin And I assure you 'twas ten to one that I came at all. In short, I begin to think you are too dangerous a being to trifle with; and, as I shall probably only make a fool of you at last, I believe we had better let matters rest as they are.

Love. You cannot mean it, sure?

Berin. No!—why, do you think you are really so irresistible, and master of so much address, as to deprive a woman of her senses in a few days acquaintance?

Love. O, no, madam; 'tis only by your preserving your senses that I can hope to be admitted into your favour—your taste, judgment, and discernment, are what I build my hopes on.

Berin. Very modest upon my word!—and it certainly follows, that the greatest proof I can give of my possessing those qualities would be my admiring Mr Loveless!

Love. O that were so cold a proof——

Berin. What shall I do more?—Esteem you?

Love. O, no—worse and worse.—Can you behold a man, whose every faculty your attractions have engrossed—whose whole soul, as by enchantment, you have seized on—can you see him tremble at your feet, and talk of so poor a return as your esteem?

Berin. What more would you have me give to a married man?

Love. How doubly cruel to remind me of a misfortune!

Berin. A misfortune to be married to so charming a woman as Amanda!

Love. I grant all her merit, but—'sdeath! now see what you have done by talking of her—she's here, by all that's unlucky!

Berin. O Ged, we had both better get out of the way, for I should feel as awkward to meet her as you.

Love. Ay—but, if I mistake not, I see Townly coming this way also—I must see a little into this matter. (*Steps aside.*

Berin. O, if that's your intention—I am no woman if I suffer myself to be outdone in curiosity.

(*Goes on the other side.*

Enter AMANDA.

Aman. Mr Loveless come home and walking on the lawn!—I will not suffer him to walk so late, though perhaps it is to shew his neglect of me.—Mr Loveless—ha!—Townly again!—how I am persecuted!

Enter TOWNLY.

Town. Madam, you seem disturbed!

Aman. Sir, I have reason.

Town. Whatever be the cause, I would to Heaven it were in my power to bear the pain, or to remove the malady.

Aman. Your interference can only add to my distress.

Town. Ah, madam, if it be the sting of unrequited love you suffer from, seek for your remedy in revenge; weigh well the strength and beauty of your charms, and rouse up that spirit a woman ought to bear—disdain the false embraces of a husband—see at your feet a real lover—his zeal may give him title to your pity, although his merit cannot claim your love!

Lov. (*Aside.*) So, so, very fine, i'faith!

Aman. Why do you presume to talk to me thus?—is this your friendship to Mr Loveless? I perceive you will compel me at last to acquaint him with your treachery.

Town. He could not upbraid me if you were; he deserves it from me, for he has not been more false to you than faithless to me.

Aman. To you!

Town. Yes, madam; the lady for whom he now deserts those charms which he was never worthy of, was mine by right; and I imagined, too, by inclination. Yes, madam, Berinthia, who now—

Aman. Berinthia!—impossible!

Town. 'Tis true, or may I never merit your attention. She is the deceitful sorceress who now holds your husband's heart in bondage.

Aman. I will not believe it.

Town. By the faith of a true lover, I speak from conviction. This very day I saw them together, and overheard—

Aman. Peace, sir! I will not even listen to such slander; this is a poor device to work on my resentment, to listen to your insidious addresses. No, sir; though Mr Loveless may be capable of error, I am convinced I cannot be deceived so grossly in him, as to believe what you now report; and for Berinthia, you should have fixed on some more probable person for my rival than she who is my relation and my friend: for, while I am myself free from guilt, I will never believe that love can beget injury, or confidence create ingratitude.

Town. If I do not prove this to you—

Aman. You never shall have an opportunity—From the artful manner in which you first shew'd yourself to me, I might have been led, as far as virtue permitted, to have thought you less criminal than unhappy; but this last unmanly artifice merits at once my resentment and contempt. [*Exit.*

Town. Sure there's divinity about her; and she has dispensed some portion of honour's light to me: yet can I bear to lose Berinthia without revenge or compensation?—Perhaps she is not so culpable as I thought her. I was mistaken when I began to think lightly of Amanda's virtue, and may be in my censure of my Berinthia—Surely I love her still; for I feel I should be happy to find myself in the wrong. [*Exit.*

Enter LOVELESS *and* BERINTHIA.

Berin. Your servant, Mr Loveless.

Love. Your servant, madam.

Berin. Pray, what do you think of this?

Love. Truly, I don't know what to say.

Berin. Don't you think we steal forth two contemptible creatures?

Love. Why, tolerably so, I must confess.

Berin. And do you conceive it possible for you ever to give Amanda the least uneasiness again?

Love. No, I think we never should, indeed.

Berin. We!—why, monster, you don't pretend that I ever entertain'd a thought—

Love. Why then, sincerely and honestly, Berinthia, there is something in my wife's conduct which strikes me so forcibly, that if it were not for shame, and the fear of hurting you in her opinion, I swear I would follow her, confess my error, and trust to her generosity for forgiveness.

Berin. Nay, pr'ythee don't let your respect for me prevent you; for as my object in trifling with you was nothing more than to pique Townly, and as I perceive he has been actuated by a similar motive, you may depend on't I shall make no mystery of the matter to him.

Love. By no means inform him; for though I may chuse to pass by his conduct without resentment, how will he presume to look me in the face again?

Berin. How will you presume to look him in the face again?

Love. He—who has dared to attempt the honour of my wife!

Berin. You—who have dared to attempt the honour of his mistress!—Come, come, be ruled by me who affect more levity than I have, and don't think of anger in this cause. A readiness to resent injuries is a virtue only in those who are slow to injure.

Love. Then will I be ruled by you, and when you shall think proper to undeceive Townly, may

your good qualities make as sincere a convert of him as Amanda's have of me. When truth's extended from us, then we own the robe of virtue is a sacred habit.

Could women but our secret counsels scan—
Could they but reach the deep reserve of man—
To keep our love, they'd rate our virtue high—
They live together, and together die! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

SIR TUNBELLY'S *House.*

Enter MISS HOYDEN, *Nurse, and* YOUNG FASHION.

Y. Fash. This quick dispatch of the chaplain's I take so kindly, it shall give him claim to my favour as long as I live, I assure you.

Miss Hoy. And to mine too, I promise you.

Nurse. I most humbly thank your honours; and may your children swarm about you like bees about a honey-comb.

Miss Hoy. I'cod with all my heart—the more the merrier, I say, ha, nurse?

Enter LORY, *taking* YOUNG FASHION *hastily aside.*

Lory. One word with you, for Heaven's sake.

Y. Fash. What the devil's the matter?

Lory. Sir, your fortune's ruin'd, if you are not married—yonder's your brother, arrived with two coaches and six horses, twenty footmen, and a coat worth fourscore pounds, so judge what will become of your lady's heart.

Y. Fash. Is he in the house yet?

Lory. No, they are capitulating with him at the

gate. Sir Tunbelly luckily takes him for an impostor, and I have told him that we had heard of this plot before.

Y. Fash. That's right. (*To Miss.*) My dear, here's a troublesome business my man tells me of, but don't be frighten'd, we shall be too hard for the rogue. Here's an impudent fellow at the gate (not knowing I was come hither incognito) has taken my name upon him, in hopes to run away with you.

Miss Hoy. O the brazen-faced varlet! it's well we are married, or may be we might never have been so.

Y. Fash. (*Aside.*) Egad like enough.—Pr'ythee, nurse, run to Sir Tunbelly, and stop him from going to the gate before I speak with him.

Nurse. An't please your honour, my lady and I had best lock ourselves up till the danger be over.

Y. Fash. Do so, if you please.

Miss Hoy. Not so fast—I won't be lock'd up any more now I'm married.

Y. Fash. Yes, pray, my dear, do, till we have seiz'd this rascal.

Miss Hoy. Nay, if you'll pray me, I'll do any thing.

(*Exeunt Miss and Nurse*

Y. Fash. (*To* Lory.) Hark you, sirrah, things are better than you imagine—the wedding's over.

Lory. The devil it is, sir!

Y. Fash. Not a word—all's safe—but Sir Tunbelly don't know it, nor must not yet; so I am resolved to brazen the business out, and have the pleasure of turning the imposture upon his lordship, which I believe may easily be done.

Enter Sir Tunbelly *and Servants, armed with clubs, pitchforks, &c.*

Y. Fash. Did you ever hear, sir, of so impudent an undertaking?

Sir Tun. Never, by the mass—but we'll tickle him, I'll warrant you.

Y. Fash. They tell me, sir, he has a great many people with him, disguised like servants.

Sir Tun. Ay, ay, rogues enow—but we have mastered them.—We only fired a few shot over their heads, and the regiment scowered in an instant.—— Here, Thomas, bring in your prisoner.

Y. Fash. If you please, Sir Tunbelly, it will be best for me not to confront the fellow yet, till you have heard how far his impudence will carry him.

Sir Tun. Egad, your lordship is an ingenious person. Your lordship then will please to step aside.

Lory. (*Aside.*) 'Fore Heaven, I applaud my master's modesty! (*Exeunt* YOUNG FASHION *and* LORY.

Enter Servants, with LORD FOPPINGTON, *disarmed.*

Sir Tun. Come—bring him along, bring him along.

Ld Fop. What the pax do you mean, gentlemen? is it fair time, that you are all drunk before supper?

Sir Tun. Drunk, sirrah!—here's an impudent rogue for you! Drunk or sober, bully, I'm a justice of the peace, and know how to deal with strollers.

Ld Fop. Strollers!

Sir Tun. Ay, strollers.—Come, give an account of yourself—What's your name? Where do you live? Do you pay scot and lot? Come, are you a freeholder or a copyholder?

Ld Fop. And why dost thou ask me so many impertinent questions?

Sir Tun. Because I'll make you answer 'em before I have done with you, you rascal you.

Ld Fop. Before Gad, all the answers I can make to 'em is, that you are a very extraordinary old fellow, stap my vitals!

Sir Tun. Nay, if thou art for joking with deputy lieutenants, we know how to deal with you—Here, draw a warrant for him immediately.

Ld Fop. A warrant!—What the devil is't thou wou'd'st be at, old gentleman?

Sir Tun. I would be at you, sirrah, (if my hands were not tied as a magistrate,) and with these two double fists beat your teeth down your throat, you dog you.

Ld Fop. And why would'st thou spoil my face at that rate?

Sir Tun. For your design to rob me of my daughter, villain.

Ld Fop. Rob thee of thy daughter! Now do I begin to believe I am in bed and asleep, and that all this is but a dream. Pr'ythee, old father, wilt thou give me leave to ask thee one question?

Sir Tun. I can't tell whether I will or not, till I know what it is.

Ld Fop. Why then it is, whether thou did'st not write to my Lord Foppington to come down and marry thy daughter?

Sir Tun. Yes, marry did I, and my Lord Foppington is come down, and shall marry my daughter before she's a day older.

Ld Fop. Now give me thy hand, old dad—I thought we should understand one another at last.

Sir Tun. This fellow's mad—here, bind him hand and foot. (*They bind him.*

Ld Fop. Nay, pr'ythee, knight, leave fooling—thy jest begins to grow dull.

Sir Tun. Bind him, I say—he's mad—bread and water, a dark room, and a whip, may bring him to his senses again.

Ld Fop. Pr'ythee, Sir Tunbelly, why should you take such an aversion to the freedom of my address, as to suffer the rascals thus to skewer down my arms like a rabbit? 'Egad, if I don't waken quickly, by all that I can see, this is like to prove one of the most impertinent dreams that ever I dreamt in my life. (*Aside.*

Enter MISS HOYDEN *and Nurse.*

Miss Hoy. (*Going up to him.*) Is this he that would have run away with me? Fough! how he stinks of sweets!—Pray, father, let him be dragged through the horse-pond.

Ld Fop. (*Aside.*) This must be my wife, by her natural inclination to her husband.

Miss Hoy. Pray, father, what do you intend to do with him—hang him?

Sir Tun. That at least, child.

Nurse. Ay, and it's e'en too good for him too.

Ld Fop. (*Aside.*) Madame la Governante, I presume; hitherto this appears to me to be one of the most extraordinary families that ever man of quality matched into.

Sir Tun. What's become of my lord, daughter?

Miss Hoy. He's just coming, sir.

Ld Fop. (*Aside.*) My lord!—What does he mean by that now?

Enter YOUNG FASHION *and* LORY.

Ld Fop. Stap my vitals, Tam! now the dream's out.

Y. Fash. Is this the fellow, sir, that designed to trick me of your daughter?

Sir Tun. This is he, my lord; how do you like him? is not he a pretty fellow to get a fortune?

Y. Fash. I find by his dress he thought your daughter might be taken with a beau.

Miss Hoy. O gemini! Is this a beau? Let me see him again. Ha! I find a beau is no such ugly thing neither.

Y. Fash. 'Egad, she'll be in love with him presently—I'll e'en have him sent away to gaol. (*To* LORD FOP.) Sir, though your undertaking shews you a person of no extraordinary modesty, I suppose you ha'n't confidence enough to expect much favour from me?

Ld Fop. Strike me dumb, Tam, thou art a very impudent fellow!

Nurse. Look if the varlot has not the frontery to call his lordship plain Thomas!

Sir Tun. Come, is the warrant writ?

Chap. Yes, sir.

Ld Fop. Hold, one moment, pray, gentlemen—My Lord Foppington, shall I beg one word with your lordship?

Nurse. O, ho, it's my lord with him now; see how afflictions will humble folks!

Miss Hoy. Pray, my lord, don't let him whisper too close, lest he bite your ear off.

Ld Fop. I am not altogether so hungry as your ladyship is pleased to imagine. (*To* Y. FASHION.) Look you, Tam, I am sensible I have not been so kind to you as I ought, but I hope you'll forgive what's past, and accept of the five thousand pounds I offer. Thou may'st live in extreme splendour with it, stap my vitals!

Y. Fash. It's a much easier matter to prevent a disease than to cure it. A quarter of that sum would have secured your mistress, twice as much won't redeem her. (*Leaving him.*

Sir Tun. Well, what says he?

Y. Fash. Only the rascal offered me a bribe to let him go.

Sir Tun. Ay, he shall go, with a halter to him—Lead on, constable.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, here is Muster Loveless, and Muster Colonel Townly, and some ladies, to wait on you.

Lory. (*Aside.*) So, sir, what will you do now?

Y. Fash. Be quiet—they are in the plot. (*To* SIR TUNBELLY.) Only a few friends, Sir Tunbelly, whom I wish to introduce to you.

Ld Fop. Thou art the most impudent fellow, Tam, that ever nature yet brought into the world. Sir Tunbelly, strike me speechless, but these are my

friends and my guests, and they will soon inform thee, whether I am the true Lord Foppington or not.

Enter LOVELESS, TOWNLY, AMANDA, *and* BERINTHIA.

Y. Fash. So, gentlemen, this is friendly; I rejoice to see you.

Town. My lord, we are fortunate to be the witnesses of your lordship's happiness.

Love. But your lordship will do us the honour to introduce us to Sir Tunbelly Clumsy?

Aman. And us to your lady?

Ld Fop. Ged take me, but they are all in a story!

Sir Tun. Gentlemen, you do me great honour; my Lord Foppington's friends will ever be welcome to me and mine.

Y. Fash. My love, let me introduce you to these ladies.

Miss Hoy. By goles, they look so fine and so stiff, I am almost ashamed to come nigh 'em.

Aman. A most engaging lady indeed!

Miss Hoy. Thank ye, ma'am!

Berin. And I doubt not will soon distinguish herself in the beau monde.

Miss Hoy. Where is that?

Y. Fash. You'll soon learn, my dear.

Love. But, Lord Foppington—

Ld Fop. Sir!

Love. Sir! I was not addressing myself to you, sir; pray who is this gentleman? he seems rather in a singular predicament.

Sir Tun. Ha, ha, ha!—So these are your friends and your guests, ha, my adventurer?

Ld Fop. I am struck dumb with their impudence, and cannot positively say whether I shall ever speak again or not.

Sir Tun. Why, sir, the modest gentleman want-

ed to pass himself upon me for Lord Foppington, and carry off my daughter.

Love. A likely plot to succeed, truly, ha, ha!

Ld Fop. As Gad shall judge me, Loveless, I did not expect this from thee: Come, pr'ythee confess the joke; tell Sir Tunbelly that I am the real Lord Foppington, who yesterday made love to thy wife; was honoured by her with a slap on the face, and afterwards pink'd through the bady by thee.

Sir Tun. A likely story, truly, that a peer wou'd behave thus!

Love. A curious fellow indeed! that wou'd scandalize the character he wants to assume; but what will you do with him, Sir Tunbelly?

Sir Tun. Commit him certainly, unless the bride and bridegroom chuse to pardon him.

Ld Fop. Bride and bridegroom! for Gad's sake, Sir Tunbelly, 'tis tarture to me to hear you call 'em so!

Miss Hoy. Why, you ugly thing, what would you have him call us? dog and cat?

Ld Fop. By no means, Miss; for that sounds ten times more like man and wife than t'other.

Sir Tun. A precious rogue this, to come a wooing!

Enter Servant.

Serv. There are some more gentle folks below, to wait upon Lord Foppington.

Town. 'Sdeath, Tom! what will you do now?

Ld Fop. Now, Sir Tunbelly, here are witnesses, who, I believe, are not corrupted.

Sir Tun. Peace, fellow!—Wou'd your lordship chuse to have your guests shewn here, or shall they wait till we come to 'em?

Y. Fash. I believe, Sir Tunbelly, we had better not have these visitors here yet—'Egad, all must out! (*Aside.*

Love. Confess, confess, we'll stand by you.

Ld Fop. Nay, Sir Tunbelly, I insist on your calling evidence on both sides, and if I do not prove that fellow an impostor——

Y. Fash. Brother, I will save you the trouble, by now confessing that I am not what I have passed myself for:—Sir Tunbelly, I am a gentleman, and I flatter myself a man of character; but 'tis with great pride I assure you I am not Lord Foppington.

Sir Tun. Ouns!—what's this?—an impostor!—a cheat!—fire and faggots, sir!—if you are not Lord Foppington, who the devil are you?

Y. Fash. Sir, the best of my condition is, I am your son-in-law, and the worst of it is, I am brother to that noble peer.

Ld Fop. Impudent to the last!

Sir Tun. My son-in-law! Not yet I hope?

Y. Fash. Pardon me, sir, thanks to the goodness of your chaplain, and the kind offices of this old gentlewoman.

Lory. 'Tis true, indeed, sir; I gave your daughter away, and Mrs Nurse here was clerk.

Sir Tun. Knock that rascal down!—But speak, Jezebel, how's this?

Nurse. Alas, your honour, forgive me!—I have been overreached in this business as well as you; your worship knows, if the wedding dinner had been ready, you would have given her away with your own hands.

Sir Tun. But how durst you do this without acquainting me?

Nurse. Alas, if your worship had seen how the poor thing begged and prayed, and clung and twined about me like ivy round an old wall, you wou'd say I, who had nursed it and reared it, must have had a heart of stone to refuse it.

Sir Tun. Ouns! I shall go mad! Unloose my lord there, you scoundrels!

Ld Fop. Why, when these gentlemen are at leisure, I should be glad to congratulate you on your son-in-law with a little more freedom of address.

Miss Hoy. 'Egad though—I don't see which is to be my husband, after all.

Love. Come, come, Sir Tunbelly, a man of your understanding must perceive, that an affair of this kind is not to be mended by anger and reproaches.

Town. Take my word for it, Sir Tunbelly, you are only tricked into a son-in-law you may be proud of: my friend, Tom Fashion, is as honest a fellow as ever breathed.

Love. That he is, depend on't, and will hunt or drink with you most affectionately; be generous, old boy, and forgive them.

Sir Tun. Never—the hussy!—when I had set my heart on getting her a title!

Ld Fop. Now, Sir Tunbelly, that I am untrussed, give me leave to thank thee for the very extraordinary reception I have met with in thy damned, execrable mansion, and at the same time to assure you, that of all the bumpkins and blockheads I have had the misfortune to meet with, thou art the most obstinate and egregious, strike me ugly!

Sir Tun. What's this!—Ouns! I believe you are both rogues alike!

Ld Fop. No, Sir Tunbelly, thou wilt find to thy unspeakable mortification, that I am the real Lord Foppington, who was to have disgraced myself by an alliance with a clod; and that thou hast matched thy girl to a beggarly younger brother of mine, whose title deeds might be contained in thy tobacco-box.

Sir Tun. Puppy, puppy!—I might prevent their being beggars if I chose it; for I could give 'em as good a rent-roll as your lordship.

Town. Well said, Sir Tunbelly.

Ld Fop. Ay, old fellow, but you will not do it;

for that would be acting like a Christian, and thou art a thorough barbarian, stap my vitals!

Sir Tun. Udzookers! now six such words more, and I'll forgive them directly.

Love. 'Slife, Sir Tunbelly! you should do it, and bless yourself; ladies, what say you?

Aman. Good Sir Tunbelly, you must consent.

Berin. Come, you have been young yourself, Sir Tunbelly.

Sir Tun. Well, then, if I must, I must; but turn that sneering lord out, however; and let me be revenged on somebody; but first, look whether I am a barbarian, or not; there, children, I join your hands, and when I'm in a better humour, I'll give you my blessing.

Love. Nobly done, Sir Tunbelly; and we shall see you dance at a grandson's wedding yet.

Miss Hoy. By goles though, I don't understand this; what, an't I to be a lady after all? only plain Mrs—what's my husband's name, nurse?

Nurse. 'Squire Fashion.

Miss Hoy. 'Squire, is he?—Well, that's better than nothing.

Ld Fop. Now will I put on a philosophic air, and shew these people that it is not possible to put a man of my quality out of countenance. Dear Tam, since things are thus fallen out, pr'ythee give me leave to wish thee joy; I do it *de bon coeur*, strike me dumb! You have married into a family of great politeness and uncommon elegance of manners; and your bride appears to be a lady beautiful in person, modest in her deportment, refined in her sentiments, and of nice morality, split my windpipe!

Miss Hoy. By goles, husband, break his bones, if he calls me names.

Y. Fash. Your lordship may keep up your spirits with your grimace, if you please; I shall support mine by Sir Tunbelly's favour, with this lady, and three thousand pounds a year.

Ld Fop. Well, adieu, Tam; ladies, I kiss your hands; Sir Tunbelly, I shall now quit thy den; but, while I retain my arms, I shall remember thou art a savage, stap my vitals! (*Exit.*

Sir Tun. By the mass, 'tis well he's gone, for I shou'd ha' been provoked by and by to ha' dun'un a mischief.—Well, if this is a lord, I think Hoyden has luck o' her side in troth.

Town. She has indeed, Sir Tunbelly,—but I hear the fiddles; his lordship, I know, had provided 'em.

Love. O, a dance, and a bottle, Sir Tunbelly, by all means.

Sir Tun. I had forgot the company below—Well, what—we must be merry then, ha?—and dance and drink, ha?—Well, 'fore George, you sha'n't say I do things by halves; son-in-law there looks like a hearty rogue, so we'll have a night of it; and which of these gay ladies will be the old man's partner, ha?—Ecod, I don't know how I came to be in so good a humour.

Berin. Well, Sir Tunbelly, my friend and I both will endeavour to keep you so; you have done a generous action, and are entitled to our attention; and if you shou'd be at a loss to divert your new guests, we will assist you to relate to them the plot of your daughter's marriage, and his lordship's deserved mortification, a subject which, perhaps, may afford no bad evening's entertainment.

Sir Tun. 'Ecod, with all my heart; though I am a main bungler at a long story.

Berin. Never fear, we will assist you, if the tale is judged worth being repeated; but of this you may be assured, that while the intention is evidently to please, British auditors will ever be indulgent to the errors of the performance. [*Exeunt.*

END OF VOLUME SEVENTH.

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